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SOLWAN;

OR,

WATERS OF COMFORT.

S O L W A N ;

OR,

WATERS OF COMFORT.

BY IBN ZAFER,

A SICILIAN ARAB OF THE TWELFTH CENTURY.

FROM THE ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPT.

BY MICHELE AMARI,

AUTHOR OF "THE WAR OF THE SICILIAN VESPERS," ETC.

AND RENDERED IN ENGLISH BY THE TRANSLATOR OF
"THE SICILIAN VESPERS."

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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SOLWÂN.

CHAPTER II.

(CONTINUED.)

§ V.—AIN AHLIH AND THE OLD WOMAN.

THERE lived, in our country of Gallicia, a young man and a young woman, both of exceeding beauty, liveliness, and intelligence. The name of the young man was, as we should say, Ain Ahlih, and that of the young woman would be, in Arabic, Sitt-an-nâr.¹ Being husband and wife, and loving each other with the tenderest affection, it appeared as if nothing in the world could have induced either of them to leave the other. It came to pass, one day, however, that Ain Ahlih, being in discourse with a party of his friends, the conversation turned upon women, and one of their number began to

relate wonders of the beauty and sprightliness of a woman whose name would signify Sitt-ad-dahab in Arabic. Ain Ahlih, being smitten with a fancy for her, asked the man who had spoken of her where she lived, and receiving for answer that her dwelling was in a neighbouring village, he had no longer any thought but for her, and his heart being filled with longing after this new love, was turned away from his wife.

It is said: The glutton often meets with that which pleases him not.²

It is said, further: The understanding is like unto the husband, the will unto the wife, and the body unto their dwelling. When the understanding is absolute master of the will, the latter devotes its whole attention to provide for the good of the body, and to preserve it from injury, even as the woman, who is governed by her husband, attends to herself, to him, to her children, and to her home; by which means they all prosper. But if, on the contrary, the will prevails over the understanding, its conduct will be evil, and its demeanour blameable, as is the case when the wife holds her husband in subjection.

Ain Ahlih hastened to the village, in which Sitt-ad-dahab dwelt, made diligent search for her house, until he discovered it, and went the rounds so perseveringly, that he at length obtained a sight of the beauty, and was struck with admiration and amazement, although she was not, in reality, more beautiful than Sitt-an-nâr.

But it is said : Of a truth, one of the most irresistible impulses of the soul is to seek after a change of condition. It is introduced into the world of being, thanks to the chain which engrafts it upon the body, and passes into the world of corruption³ by a second change which separates it from the body. Now a being, which begins its career with one change, and closes it with another, must attain the condition most suitable to it in the intermediate state, between the starting point and the goal.

Urged on by his desire to contemplate Sitt-ad-dahab, Ain Ahlih wandered so perpetually about the house, and kept his eyes so constantly upon her as to attract the notice of her husband, a Gallician of a fierce, rugged, and violent disposition, named Ad-dîb,⁴ who, having laid in wait for the young man,

surprised him, sprang upon him, slew his horse, rent his garments, seized him by the throat, and after cruelly maltreating him, called some of his friends, with whose assistance he carried him into his own habitation, where he was bound to the pole which supported one of the tents.⁵ Here Ad-dîb consigned him to the care of an old woman, of sinister aspect, who had been deprived of a hand, an eye, and her nose.

At nightfall the old woman kindled a fire near Ain Ahlih, and sat down before it, to warm herself. The poor youth, meanwhile, reflecting on the tranquil and happy life which he had hitherto led, fetched a deep sigh, upon which the old woman asked, "What sin is it, O Sheik, that has driven you into the path of degradation and misery?"⁶ "I am not aware that I have committed any sin," replied Ain Ahlih. "Ah!" rejoined the old woman, "it is thus that the horse once answered the wild boar, but he would not believe him; and when the former had related all that had befallen him, he pointed out to him a circumstance of which the horse had never thought, so that at last he brought him to confess his error." "If you would tell me how this came to pass, you

would do me a great favour," said Ain Ahlih, and the old woman continued :—

§ VI.—THE HORSE AND THE WILD BOAR.

It is related, that a brave warrior possessed a charger, which he held in great estimation, and upon which he lavished many caresses, keeping it to ride on his most arduous enterprises. He could not bear it to be out of his sight for one moment, and in the morning he led it to a meadow, where he took off its saddle and bridle, loosened its halter, and let it graze and roll upon the grass until sunset, when he would again lead it home. One day, having gone out with the horse, as usual, he dismounted, and had scarcely set foot to the ground, when the horse bolted, and ran away with all its accoutrements, nor could the horseman overtake it, notwithstanding his efforts to do so. At length, having lost sight of it, towards evening he returned home, wearied, and despairing of ever recovering his horse. The animal, meanwhile, perceiving that he was no longer followed, that it was growing dark, and that he was rather hungry, attempted to browse, but found that the bridle

prevented him ; he tried to roll upon the ground, but could not do so, on account of the saddle ; he endeavoured to lie down on his side, but was obliged to give it up, because of the stirrup, so that he passed a very comfortless night.

In the morning, he again started off at full speed, to free himself from this discomfort, when, suddenly, he found his path crossed by a river. He was therefore obliged to enter the water, in order to reach the other bank, and the bed of the river being deep, found himself compelled to swim. Now the girth and poitrel being made of leather, insufficiently dressed, it came to pass that, coming out of the water, and being exposed to the rays of the sun, they shrank in drying, and squeezed the poor beast so much as to cause his flanks and shoulders to swell. The suffering caused by this, added to the pangs of hunger, reduced the horse in a few days to such a state of weakness, that being no longer able to put one foot before the other, he was compelled to come to a halt.

It happened that just then a wild boar came up, which at first appeared inclined to despatch him ; but afterwards, moved to compassion by his miser-

able plight, asked him what was the matter. The horse told him of the tortures he endured from the bridle, saddle, and poitrel ; and entreated the wild boar to free him from them, for the love of charity, in return for which service he would become his slave and subject.⁷ But the wild boar first desired to know what crime had entailed such sufferings upon him ; and when the horse protested that he had committed none,—“ No,” resumed the wild boar,—“ No ! One of two things must be the case,—either in asserting your innocence you are a liar, or you are ignorant of your guilt. Now, if you are a liar, it is no part of my duty to break your bonds, nor can I do you any kindness, accept you as a retainer, require your gratitude, or look for any return from you.”

Thus it was said : When I beheld the soul of the liar, it was absorbed by the world of corruption,⁸ which is congenial to it, because the graff by which it is joined to the body is a vitiated one ; and that it is so is proved by the abhorrence which the soul of the liar entertains for truth in matters of fact, and its inclination to absolute denial ; for it gives a form of existence to nothingness, and

reality to vanity, and so depicts them upon the minds of those who suffer themselves to be deceived by it, and who place reliance upon its words.

It was said: Avoid intercourse with persons of base dispositions, lest your own character should contract some taint of theirs, without your knowledge or perception.

It was said: The most arduous undertaking upon which a man can enter, is to associate with a companion whose veracity he cannot trust.

It was said: Seek not to correct the base man, and enter not into connexion with him; for he will cleave to his own nature rather than to thee, and will never give it up to thee.

“But,” continued the wild boar, “if you are ignorant of that which has rendered you deserving the punishment you are now enduring, know that ignorance of your faults is a greater evil than the fault itself, because he who does not know his own guilt will persist in it, and can never hope to free himself from it.”

It was said: Be on thy guard against the ignorant man, for he sins against his own soul, nor can he esteem thee more than it.

It was said: Nothing resembles falsehood so much as ignorance ; for the liar feigns ignorance of the facts and objects which can be perceived by the senses ; and by dint of imagining a lie, which is in direct opposition to them, it becomes impressed upon his mind, and he abandons the true way for the false one. The ignorant man sees things in another light from this, for he behold ugliness in beauty, and beauty in ugliness. Thus the only difference between him and the liar is, that the latter lays before you knowingly that which is false, while the former does so unknowingly. But the ignorant man commits a greater sin against himself and against his neighbour than does the liar.

“Nevertheless,” replied the horse, “you ought not to abstain from doing good to your neighbour.”

“I have no intention of doing so,” returned the wild boar, “nevertheless:”

It was said: The wise man does not do good indiscriminately, even as the sower does not take up indiscriminately the seeds which are to be sown upon good ground.

“Endeavour, therefore, to relate to me all that

has befallen you, and to explain to me the original cause of your troubles, and the condition in which you formerly lived, in order that I can see whence the stroke has come."

The horse, thereupon, related to him everything, not omitting to mention the kind treatment he had received at the hands of his master, nor the manner in which he had left him, nor the misfortunes he had encountered in the way, before meeting with the wild boar. "Now I perceive," said the latter, "that you are ignorant of your own faults, although you have committed no fewer than six. The first of these is, having defeated the object of the warrior who desired to hold you in readiness to serve him at his need. The second, ingratitude for his benefits. The third, having caused him so much trouble in pursuing you. The fourth, having appropriated that which did not belong to you, namely, the saddle and bridle. In the fifth place, you having sinned against yourself by seeking a wild life to which you were not born, and which you would not be able to endure. And in the sixth and last place, I find obstinacy and persistence in your fault, for you might perfectly well have

returned to your master and begged his pardon, pleading in excuse your profound ignorance, before the bridle had nearly reduced you to die of hunger, and the girth and poitrel inflicted such torture upon you."

"Very well," replied the horse, "now that you have pointed out to me my faults, and opened my eyes to that which I did not perceive, blindfolded as I was by the veil of ignorance, loose me, and let me go ; for the state of exhaustion in which I am, gives me a right to demand it."

"At length," resumed the wild boar, "you perceive what you have done, and having reflected upon it, you accuse and blame yourself, acknowledge that you have deserved this punishment for your folly, and are willing to follow the dictates of that wisdom of which I have laid up a store. Now, therefore, you are worthy to receive the assistance of others. It is said, that Father Luke⁹ wrote this sentence above the door of his cell : ' He only may profit by our wisdom who knows himself, and is able to confine his desires within the limits of his ability. If thou be such a one, enter, but if not, return when thou art become such.' "

So saying, the wild boar broke the head-stall of the horse, freed him from the girth, and restored him to life.

Ain Ahlih, having listened to the story, and comprehended the simile conveyed to him by the old woman, turned to her, and said, "You have spoken the truth, and in this parable have clearly set forth to me my own case ; you have taught me many maxims of unparalleled wisdom, given me a lesson which I take home to myself, and an admonition by which I shall not fail to profit." He then related to her all that had befallen him, and entreated her to have compassion on him, show him favour, and set him at liberty, even as the wild boar had done to the horse.

"You are too simple," said she, "and do not reflect upon existing circumstances, when you ask me to do that which I cannot possibly perform at present ; nevertheless, I may, perhaps, be able to discover the means of affording you relief, and even some way of escape ; but you must have patience." And having said this, she held her peace.

Here the vizier, turning to the Metropolitan, complained of a great pain in his head, and such

a feeling of general languor that he could not possibly finish his story. He added, that he hoped to relate the rest at their meeting on the following evening, if he were better and felt strong enough, and thereupon he took his leave, and retired to bed.

Sapor, turning over in his mind the vizier's story, and the allegories contained in it, perceived at once that the name of Ain Ahlih applied to himself, he being king of Persia, the eye of his people, and the organ of their visual powers;¹⁰ that the name of Sitt-an-nâr alluded to his own kingdom of Babel,¹¹ of which the inhabitants were worshippers of fire; and that of Sitt-ad-dahab, to the Roman empire, on account of its wealth. The name of Ad-dîb, the pretended husband of Sitt-ad-dahab, was well suited to the king of the Romans, on account of the fierce cruelty he had shown towards Sapor, whom he had seized and imprisoned. Sapor's desire to behold that empire with his own eyes, was represented by that of Ain Ahlih to contemplate the beauty, and likewise his arrest by the capture of the youth. Under cover of his philosophical similes, the vizier had sought to convey him a reproof for his covetousness

and rashness, in exposing himself to danger, and for his opposition to his most faithful counsellors. Lastly, in order to pourtray himself, the life he led, his grief, his impotence, and the degradation of which he was conscious in becoming a servant of the Metropolitan in order to flatter and cajole him, the vizier had imagined the crippled, one-eyed and noiseless old woman, of repulsive and sinister aspect. He had sought to give notice to Sapor that he was, unable then to effect his liberation, but was exerting himself effectually for that purpose. The king, having reflected upon all these things, became more calm; his confidence in the vizier returned; he breathed the atmosphere of consolation; and thus passed that night and the following day.

At dusk the Metropolitan hastened to the usual meeting, and turning to the vizier, "Learned hermit," said he, "I pray you to relate to me what befel Ain Ahlih, how his misfortunes terminated, and whether the old woman succeeded in liberating him from the fetters of Ad-dib, or no. I am very curious to know all about it; and you look the picture of health this evening."

“To hear your words, and to obey your commands, are one and the same thing,” replied the vizier, and thus resumed his narrative:—

Ain Ahlih having remained all night bound, and oppressed with grief, in the morning came Ad-dib, who threatened him with death, loaded him in addition with cumbrous fetters, and went away. Ain Ahlih continued this day likewise to cheat the hours with hope, but when night spread her mantle around him, he became overpowered with gloom and anxiety, and began to weep and sob, until the old woman, having come to light the fire, and sit by it, turned to him, saying, “Be steadfast and patient, and think upon the tribulations of others, which may serve to afford you comfort; moreover, do not forget, that while you have life a great blessing yet remains to you.”

“Alas!” replied Ain Ahlih, “he was right who said that the miseries of the captive appear light to him who is free.” “Oh, young man,” interrupted she, “how many truths does your early youth prevent you from perceiving! Come, will you listen to a story which will give you some comfort?” “Willingly,” replied Ain Ahlih; “I

entreat you to relate it to me.” And the old woman began thus:—

§ VII.—THE GAZELLE AND THE ANTELOPE.

A wealthy merchant had an only son, whom he loved with the tenderest affection. Now it came to pass, that one of his friends gave the boy a little gazelle with a white forehead, for which the child conceived so great a fondness that he could not bear to be absent from it a moment. The people of the house made a handsome collar for the gazelle, and brought a sheep to suckle it until it was fully grown and its horns began to sprout. The child then inquired anxiously what was the matter with the head of the gazelle; and when he had been informed, and could never weary of admiring the black polish of the little horns, he was told that they would become much longer, and their appearance was described to him. The child, therefore, expressed to his father a great desire to see an antelope with full-grown horns; and the worthy man, having sent forth his hunters, they soon procured him one, two years old, which had attained its full vigour, and with which, it is

needless to say, that the child was delighted. The whole household likewise made a pet of it; they put it on a collar, endeavoured to tame it, and succeeded in so doing. The antelope, moreover, soon made friends with the gazelle, on account of the similarity of their species.

¹² The gazelle, therefore, one day said to the antelope, "Before I saw you I did not believe that any animal resembling me was to be found upon earth; but now I understand that you cannot be the only one." "Assuredly not," replied the antelope, "there are a great number;" and on the gazelle then asking her where they were to be found, she told her that they led a wild and wandering life in the deserts, flying from the face of man, and moreover informed her of what they fed upon, and what they drank, and of their loves, and of the increase of their kind. The gazelle's eyes sparkled with joy on hearing all this, and she conceived an eager desire to see them and live amongst them.

"No," replied the antelope, "such a desire will do you no good; you have been brought up delicately, and far removed from all perils, and

know nothing of any other life. If, therefore, you were ever to obtain your wish, you would have to repent it."

It is said : There are three species of creatures, which, if you do not lodge them and nourish them as befits their worth, will immediately turn their back upon you and break with you ; and these are kings, men of letters, and this world's goods.

It is said : Hope gives comfort in affliction, but in prosperity, like a fiery horse, it obtains the upper hand ; therefore it does not beseem the sage to follow the impulses of his feelings, except inasmuch as they may dissipate his sadness and lighten his grief. To suffer them to become absolute masters over us, would be as if one should imitate the speculations of those persons of low estate, who count heads for tails and tails for heads, and labour to overthrow the aristocracy, and to change the established forms of society.¹³

" Nevertheless," replied the gazelle, " I must go and seek my kind ; I must do so at all costs." The antelope, finding that it would be impossible to dissuade her from her intention, and fearing lest

she should meet with some disaster before she could attain her object (for she was but a simple little creature, and quite unable to guard against the snares of men), perceived that it would be necessary for her to accompany her as companion and guardian. Having chosen a favourable opportunity for flight, they both went forth from the house, and took their way towards the desert ; at sight of which the gazelle, unable to contain herself for joy, started off at a speed which nothing could arrest, until she fell into a narrow gully, hollowed out by a torrent, and there found herself a prisoner. She hoped that the antelope would come immediately to liberate her, but not seeing her appear, she remained where she was.

The child, meantime, getting up in the morning, and finding neither gazelle nor antelope, was inconsolable for their loss ; so that the father, taking pity upon him, sent for all the hunters that could be found in the neighbourhood, and having related the circumstance to them, despatched them in search of the two little fugitives, promising a handsome reward to whosoever should find them. The huntsmen immediately set to work to scour

the hills and plain ; and the merchant, mounting his palfrey, dispersed his household to the several gates of the city, to see which of them should first return, and himself, with two slaves, took the direction of the desert. There, at a distance, he beheld a man bending over some object which lay at his feet ; and hastening forward, he soon came up with him, and there he beheld a sportsman, who, having bound an antelope, was about to cut its throat. The merchant examined it closely, and recognising his own antelope, immediately took her from him, and caused him to be searched by the slaves ; and the animal's collar being discovered upon him, the merchant asked him how and where he had found it, to which the sportsman replied to the following effect :—

“ I went forth last night into the desert to hunt, and having spread a net, I crouched down near it, and towards dawn beheld an antelope and a gazelle ; the gazelle, starting off at full speed in another direction, I lost sight of it, but the antelope, advancing at a foot's pace, fell into the net, so that I caught her, and was about to take her into the city. When, however, I had come thus

far, I bethought me that I was acting foolishly, as I should probably get into trouble on account of the ornaments which were round the neck of the antelope, if they were seen; I, therefore, resolved to cut her throat, and take her into the town as venison. This is the whole of my story."

"See," said the merchant, "how you have been baffled and deprived of your reward, even like a lamb, which, striving to suck, finds a gag in its mouth. This would not have happened to you had you let the antelope go when you knew that it belonged to a master. Now you have lost the antelope, and are brought into difficulties by her collar and ornaments." He, therefore, was in the right who said:—

He who follows the paths of covetousness will end by an unlawful deed; he who chooses the way of avarice will have anguish on his track. And do you not perceive that he who, out of greediness, swallows a mouthful which goes against his stomach, exposes himself to be defiled by vomiting it up, and will have, moreover, to regret the loss of it?

The merchant having sent the antelope to his

son by one of his slaves, turned to the sportsman, and said, "Come with me and show me which direction you saw the gazelle take, and I will reward you." They set forth together in that direction, and the huntsman began to search every place and to ascend every rising ground, while the merchant followed slowly behind him, until the latter, hearing the *Nazíb*, which is the cry of the gazelle, called her; and the little animal, recognising his voice, bleated in reply, so that the merchant, following the sound, presently reached the place where she was caught in a gully or rather fissure of the ground. He extricated her, and having called the sportsman, and given him a dirhem, dismissed him, and returned home with the gazelle, to render his son's satisfaction complete.

The gazelle, however, turned away whenever she saw the antelope, and if, by chance, she found herself near her, far from resuming their former intimacy, she would fly from her at full speed. This greatly distressed the child, and his attendants therefore did all in their power to reconcile the two animals, but in vain. At length, one day, when the gazelle was asleep in a corner,

the antelope, drawing near, began to reproach her for thus withholding her friendship from her and flying her presence. "Have you then forgotten your perfidy?" asked the gazelle. "Did I not stand in the utmost need of you when I was in that strait? Did I not feel the firmest confidence that you would hasten to my rescue?" "But I neither betrayed your confidence, nor abandoned you," replied the antelope; "it is you who, from thoughtlessness and want of experience, are accusing an innocent being. If I did not hasten to free you from the peril into which you had fallen, it was because I was prevented by a power superior to my own." Therefore she related her own adventures, and how she had been caught in the huntsman's net. The gazelle perceived that the antelope was in no way to blame, and their mutual friendship was restored.

§ VIII.—CONCLUSION OF THE STORY OF AIN AHLIH.

Ain Ahlih perceiving, from this narrative, that the old woman desired to inform him of her inability to liberate him at the present time, ceased to reproach her.

Here the vizier stopped. "Well my learned hermit," exclaimed the Metropolitan, "why do you pause? Would you again put off relating to me how the matter ended? whether Ain Ahlih had to endure any further outrages from Ad-dib, and what service the old woman succeeded in rendering him?" "I would willingly relate it all to you," replied the vizier, "were it not for a feeling of general debility that has come over me." "Nay, do not leave us thus," resumed the Metropolitan, "for it would vex me more than I can say. Take courage, O Philosopher! for I have a longing desire to converse with you, and am filled with admiration of your narratives!"

"And I," returned the vizier, "will proceed, on account of the anxiety I feel to give you pleasure. If you knew, O Metropolitan, what marvels and what adventures I have in store for you, they would, indeed, fill you with amazement!" And having said this, he resumed his narrative:

"We left Ain Ahlih deeply impressed with the allegory conveyed to him by the old woman, and

resigning himself to hold his peace. Nevertheless he passed a miserable night; and at day-break Ad-dib again attacked him with insults, ill-treatment, and menaces of death, warning him not to look for assistance, nor to hope that any human being could deliver him out of his hands. The young man, upon this, began anew to reproach himself and to give way to despair, and in this manner the day wore away. Towards evening, he abandoned himself to still more violent grief, and bursting into tears, waited impatiently for the old woman to come and sit beside him, and divert his mind with her narratives. But that evening she kept constantly going backwards and forwards, in and out of the tent, without ever remaining there, which behaviour, on her part, increased the alarm of the prisoner, who took it for granted that his end was at hand, and that Ad-dib would infallibly come that very night to despatch him. He had thus passed several hours in tears and terror, without uttering a word, when at length turning to the old woman, "What ails you this evening," said he, "and why do you not as usual come and sit by me, and divert my mind with some of your

stories?" Having satisfied him on this point, "Let us see," continued she, "whether if I were to speak to you of a woman, who has been deprived of a hand, of her nose, and of an eye, and is, moreover, deformed, and reduced to the lowest depth of misery, such a history would give you comfort, restore you to composure, and lead you to praise and give thanks to God, who has saved you alive, and spared you a calamity so much more terrible than your own. Let us see whether, after that, you will venture to repeat to me that the woes of the captive appear light to him who is free. Ah, had you been able to judge of my mental condition from my outward appearance, that would have sufficed to convince you that my portion was more intolerable than yours. Listen, to me, then, young man, and I will relate to you my own history.

"Be it known to you, that I was the wife of one of the chief warriors of our country, from whom I experienced nothing but tenderness, attention, and caresses ; and with whom I lived for many years the happiest and most joyous of lives, and bore him sons and daughters, who grew up in the midst of plenty and prosperity. But afterwards it came to pass, that

the king being, for some reason, excited to anger against my husband, put him to death, caused my sons to die likewise, and sold me and my daughters as slaves, after separating us from each other. I was purchased by this warrior who has dealt so harshly with you, and who brought me to this village where we dwell. In accordance with his savage and brutal nature, he ill-used me, laid upon me an amount of labour which I was unable to perform, and overwhelmed me with unmerited punishment. In vain I attempted many times to appease him, in vain I sought the intercession of his friends and of those persons whom he held in the highest estimation, to induce him to lighten my lot, or at least to sell me again; all this served only to render him more harsh and unfeeling to my sufferings. After leading such a life for seven years I determined to fly; but this too was in vain, for he caused me to be pursued, and having recovered possession of me, cut off my nose, and began anew to oppress and torment me. I there-upon had recourse once more to entreaties and intercessions, but having failed in deterring him from his evil practices, at the end of seven years I

fled again, and was again captured. He then deprived me of an eye, and continued to afflict me as before. This I endured for another seven years, at the end of which I once more made my escape and was retaken. After this third attempt at evasion he cut off my hand, and said to me :— ‘ Now the only members you have left, which can be employed in my service are an eye and a hand ; give heed to my words ; should you again attempt to escape, I will cut off both your feet, and will continue to make use of your eye to watch and of your hand to work ; ’ and having accompanied his words with a terrific oath, from that time forward he has done nothing but trample upon me and torment me more cruelly than ever. But now, at length, I am resolved ; I will loose your bonds, and then slay myself with my own hand in order to escape from my sufferings. That is the reason why you have seen me constantly wandering to and fro. The prospect of death appalled and troubled me ; now, however, I have no desire but to die.”

So saying, she unfastened the fetters of Ain Ahlih, cut the cords which bound him, and was

grasping a poniard, when the young man exclaimed: "If I should suffer you to slay yourself, I should be an accomplice of your crime," and wresting the dagger from her grasp, "come with me," he cried, "and we will escape or perish together." "How can I follow you, oppressed as I am with age and weakness?" replied the old woman. "It matters not," answered Ain Ahlih, "the darkness favours us, a place of refuge is at hand, and my arms are strong enough to bear you." "Oh," said the old woman, "since you have thought of this, be it known to you that I have no need of any one to carry me, so long as my life lasts." Thus they went forth together, and before the night was over they had reached a place of safety. Ain Ahlih liberally rewarded the old woman, adopted her as his mother, and obeyed her implicitly as long as she lived. This is all that I know of this interesting history.

§ IX.—CONCLUSION OF THE ADVENTURE OF SAVOR II.

"This is indeed an admirable tale," exclaimed the Metropolitan. "In truth, most learned friar, I would fain never be absent from you, and I even

desire the prolongation of our campaign, that I may have the more time to enjoy and profit by your company. I would almost consent to abandon both kindred and country, in order to be near you."

They thereupon rose to retire to rest; and Sapor, pondering over the interpretation of the allegory, perceived himself to be represented by the gazelle, and the visier by the antelope; while their going forth to the desert, and the fall of the gazelle into the fissure, referred to his own journey with the vizier until he became the prisoner of Kaisar; and the gazelle's aversion to the antelope, to the suspicions he had entertained of the vizier because he delayed his liberation. He, moreover, gathered from the rest of the story, that the vizier was already preparing to deliver him, to conduct him by night to his capital which was close at hand, and even to carry him on his back should he be unable to walk; thus he considered his escape as certain.

Accordingly, the next night, the vizier having stolen into the tent which served as a kitchen, threw a powerful soporific into the food prepared

for the Metropolitan and for all the guards of Sapor. When the Metropolitan's table was spread, he, as usual, ate some of his own provision separately ; and scarcely an hour had elapsed before all the others, overcome by the strength of the drug, lay extended fast asleep on their couches or at their posts. The vizier then, without loss of time, opened the trap-door in the back of the bull, assisted his sovereign to come forth, loosed the chains from his neck and hands, and gliding along stealthily and silently, they succeeded in making their way together out of the Roman camp.

Then, hurrying forward, they made all speed towards the city, and soon reached the walls, from the summit of which they were challenged by the sentinels. The vizier, upon this, going forward alone, commanded them not to raise their voices, and making himself known, told them that their king was safe. They obtained instant admittance into the city, where their arrival infused fresh courage into the breasts of all. Sapor, without loss of time, assembled the forces, supplied them with arms, and commanded that all the men should equip them-

selves; that at the first sound of the nakusses¹⁴ of the besiegers, issuing forth in silence from the city, they should approach the Roman camp, range themselves in order of battle, and hold themselves in readiness to attack; and that at the second sound they should make a general assault, each one advancing against the enemy to whom he should find himself opposed. When he had thus fully instructed them as to the part they were to take in the encounter, Sapor having selected a powerful body of the bravest and most stalwart knights in the Persian host, took up his station over against the tent of Kaisar.

Accordingly, when the second watch was sounded, the Persians charged on all sides, while Sapor advanced straight upon the tent of the hostile sovereign. The Romans, apprised of the discouragement of the besieged, and believing that they durst not issue forth beyond the gates of the city, were off their guard and in disorder, and were taken completely at unawares by the Persians. Kaisar fell into the hands of Sapor, and was made prisoner; the camp was sacked, the treasure seized, and those only who saved

themselves by flight escaped from the general slaughter.

Sapor having thus returned to the seat of his empire, divided the booty amongst his soldiers, distributed largesses to all the citizens according to their degree, conferred honours and favours upon those who had governed the kingdom in his absence, and committed the whole direction of public affairs to the vizier who had freed him from his captivity. Then, having summoned Kaisar to his presence, and showing him great honour and courtesy, "I will spare your life," said he, "even as you spared mine, and will not inflict upon you the like cruel imprisonment to which you subjected me. I demand nothing of you except to make good the damage which you have caused in my dominions; to rebuild the edifices which you have destroyed, to plant one of the olives of your country in the place of every palm-tree that you have cut down in mine; and, lastly, to release all the Persian prisoners in the Roman Empire.

Kaisar accepted these conditions, and proceeded immediately to carry them into effect. When he came to the restoration of the damaged walls of

Jundi-Shahpûr, the Persian sovereign desired that they should be repaired with Roman cement ;¹⁵ and the necessary orders having been given by Kaisar, a quantity of that cement was brought to the capital of Persia ; and thus the work was completed. This done, Sapor sent his prisoner back to his own country in freedom and honour ; first, however, addressing to him these words of warning : “ Now, make haste to take up arms, and make all your preparations for war, for I shall assuredly come and attack you within a short space.”

The author saith: “ I have attained in this second Solwanah the object which I had proposed to myself; and praise be to God for the truths which He has revealed to us upon this subject.”¹⁶

CHAPTER III.

PATIENCE,¹ WHICH IS THE OFFSPRING OF FORTITUDE.

§ I.—VERSES OF THE KORAN.

OUR Lord God, whose name be blessed, speaking of His elect favourite, the Prophet whom He loves, has said :

“Wherefore do thou bear opposition with patience; but thy patience shall not be practicable unless with God’s assistance. And be not thou grieved on account of the unbelievers; neither be thou troubled for that which they subtilely devise; for God is with those who fear him and are upright.”*

Which saying alludes to the secret council held by the persecutors of the Prophet, in order to plot some treacherous device for his hurt, as is explained in the following verse :

† “And call to mind, when the unbelievers

* Koran, chap. xvi., v. 128.

† Ibid, chap. viii., v. 30.

plotted against thee, that they might either detain thee in bonds, or put thee to death, or expel thee the city.”²

§ II.—ATTEMPT UPON THE LIFE OF MAHOMET.

Thus it befell. The chiefs of the Koreish having assembled in the hall of council, in order to determine how they might rid themselves of the Apostle of God, Iblis presented himself before them in the form of an old Bedouin; and, when they desired to cast him forth from the council, he said to them: “I am from the Nejid, and am not come as a spy. I know the purpose for which you are assembled, and possibly my presence here may prove beneficial to you.” Then each one began to set forth his opinion. “I think,” said Otba, “that we ought to rid ourselves of him by sending him into banishment. If, after this, he should succeed in his undertaking, his victory will turn to our profit; and if he should perish, it will answer our purpose as well as if we had slain him with our own hands.”

And Iblis,—cursed be he of God,—replied:

“That will not do, for have you not heard of the eloquence of his words, and of the power he exercises over the minds of men? How would you fare if he were to fall in with some powerful Arab tribe? He would turn their heads, and lead them against you to expel you from hence!”

“For my part,” urged another, “I would bind him, cast him into prison, and leave him there to perish.”

But Iblis returned: “That will not do; for are you not aware of the number of his friends and kinsmen, and that they would not suffer it? It would kindle a war between you and them; your strength would be exhausted; and it may be that the wheel of fortune would turn against you.”

Then Abû Jahl, may God confound him, spake thus: “Let us take a gallant youth from each Kabila of the Koreish, and give every one of them a sword. Then they shall go and fall upon Mahomet while he is asleep, and every one of them shall strike his blow. The guilt of his blood being thus divided between all the Kabiles, his

family will not be sufficiently powerful to take vengeance upon them all."

"Here is one at length who has hit the mark," exclaimed Iblis, may he be accursed. And all agreeing to the proposal of Abû Jahl, the assembly was dissolved. But God, by a special revelation, forewarned His Apostle of this conspiracy, and commanded him to take refuge at Medina. The assassins having therefore assembled in front of his dwelling at an early hour of the night, the Prophet commanded Ali to lay himself down upon his carpet, and cover himself with his green mantle, assuring him that he should receive no injury from the Koreish. Ali obeyed, and Mahomet left the house, before the door of which the assassins were keeping watch. He went forth, reciting the commencement of the chapter entitled Y. S., "I swear by the instructive," etc.; and taking a handful of earth, he sprinkled it upon their heads, and thus, unseen by any, issued forth and departed to his *cavé*.³ The heathen assassins, meanwhile, having looked into the house, and beheld Ali lying upon the carpet and covered with the green mantle, believed him to be Mahomet

lying there asleep ; and being unable to enter, they waited for day. At dawn Ali rose from the carpet. They looked fixedly at him, and asked of him where was Mahomet. " I do not know," replied Ali ; " you bade him depart, and he is gone." Thereupon they seized Ali, and imprisoned him for a time in the mosque, but afterwards set him at liberty.

§ III.—SAYINGS OF THE PROPHET CONCERNING PATIENCE.

The Prophet, peace be with him, and the blessing of God, has said : " The believer hath knowledge, for his friend ; prudence, for his vizier ; understanding, for his guide ; activity, for his governor ; benignity, for his father ; piety, for his brother ; and patience, for the captain of his armies.⁴ Be thou content to be distinguished for a virtue which holds the command over all the rest." He does not mean by this to imply that patience is a greater virtue than knowledge, understanding, and the others, but rather that none of these can be firmly rooted without patience, in which are comprised firmness, moderation, and perseverance. Now, a man who is gifted with any one of the aforesaid

virtues, but has not patience, will, owing to this deficiency, become even as one who is not possessed of any virtue; and in very deed, patience rules over all virtues, even as a host is governed by a captain, who never absents himself from the camp, and neglects no measure by which he may provide for the comfort and security of his forces.

§ IV.—PHILOSOPHICAL SENTENCES, IN PROSE AND RHYME,
CONCERNING PATIENCE.

It is related of Ali, peace be to him, that he was wont to say: "Patience is a palfrey which never stumbleth."

It is said, moreover, that amongst the sentences inscribed on the yellow leaves which were suspended in the great temple of Persia,¹ was the following: "Even as the iron cleaveth to the magnet, so doth success to patience. Endure, therefore, and thou shalt conquer."

And be it known to you, O reader! and may God show you favour, that the shadow of patience endures for ever, and that he who loses it remains in wretchedness. Patience is the stair by which we attain to contentment. And the least of the

benefits of patience is this, that by it you embitter the triumph of your enemy, who exults with insolent satisfaction on beholding your affliction.

There are two kinds of patience ; that which is universal and governs the body, and that which is individual and governs the mind ; which distinction has been set forth by Habîb Ibn Âus in the following verses :

“ Patience is like unto a coat of mail, and he who clotheth himself in it in adversity, putteth on excellent armour.

“ And there is the patience of the mind, whose virtue is well known ; the patience of kings, which doth not show itself in the body.”

The same Habîb wrote this verse likewise :

“ When once thou hast seen how a man can take courage and endure ; thou mayest know the quality of his mind.”⁶

Nahshal Ibn Harri has sung :

“ That day of scorching heat, which had well nigh burnt us up, although no flame issued from the furnace ;

“ We endured until it wore away ; and thus patience alone can wear away the days of adversity.”⁷

I have written the following verses on the same subject :

“ The fate of man is in accordance with his worth. A man may be known by his patience in enduring the calamities which befall him.

“ He hath little to hope from fortune who hath little patience to support him.”

And another poet has said :

“ He who in adversity cleaveth to patience, will prosper all his days.

“ Endurance is the most effectual remedy for the infirmities of the valiant, and it becometh him well to keep himself from impatience, which rendeth the mantle of decorum.”

Amr dû 'l-Kalb hath said :

“ A host of woes encompassed me around ; I was enclosed in the midst of them, as the string of the sandal is between the fingers.

“ Nevertheless, I stood my ground ; and while the cowards disbanded themselves and fled, I, like a faithful brother, fought in defence of my people.

“ Meanwhile the hand of death was upon me, — death which one of these nights will bring to me.”^s

These are examples of maxims concerning patience in general. This virtue is of many kinds,

but one kind alone appertains to the subject of my book, and this is the patience of kings, which is composed of three elements. First, that of long-suffering, which gives birth to clemency. Secondly, watchfulness and foresight, which cause the prosperity of kingdoms. Thirdly, courage, which leads to two results; the one shows itself in the character of the king in the shape of firmness; the other in the defence of the state by the warlike energy of the prince, and his readiness to take up arms; which is not to be understood as readiness to fight with his own hand, for this in a king would be rashness, thoughtlessness, and vanity. The courage of a king should consist in the intrepidity which causes him to be the keystone of the army in battle, and a rock of refuge in defeat; and this so long as any adhere to him whom he can trust to defend his person, to repulse the attacks directed against him, and to preserve him from all injury.

§ V.—INTREPIDITY OF OHOSROES ANÛSHIREWÂN.

The Persians relate that on one occasion in the pairing season, an elephant in its fury entered the

palace of Chosroes Anûshirewân,⁹ for at this season the elephant no longer obeys its driver, and overthrows and tramples down all those who seek to arrest its path. He made his way to the hall in which Chosroes was seated surrounded by his courtiers, all of whom fled at the approach of the infuriated animal. Chosroes alone remained seated on his throne, and with him one of his favourite knights, who stationed himself in front of the king, brandishing an axe. The elephant rushed upon him, but the knight did not move. He waited for the animal to strike at him with his trunk, and then dealt so severe a blow upon it with his axe that the elephant turned from him, grievously wounded. Meanwhile, Chosroes, during the whole of the danger, not only had never risen to quit the hall, but had not even changed countenance, nor lost his composure for a single instant.

This is the highest degree of courage that is required of a king. But if the sovereign does not find any to adhere to him whom he can trust to defend his person, it is well that he should then defend himself, either by confronting the enemy if he deems he can repulse him, or by flight, if he

perceives successful resistance to be impossible, and fears lest his subjects should be injured by his death.

§ VI.—INSTANCE OF THE VALOUR OF THE ABBASSID^{HE} CALIPH,
HADI.

We read concerning Mûsa el Hadi,¹⁰ that being one day in his garden, surrounded by his servants and courtiers, unarmed, and mounted upon an ass, his chamberlain came to inform him that a Kharej, whom he was exceedingly desirous to have in his power, had been brought thither a prisoner. Mûsa thereupon ordered that the man should be immediately conducted to his presence, and he accordingly appeared led between two soldiers, who held him by the wrists. But no sooner had the Kharej entered, than suddenly disengaging his arms from his keepers, and snatching the scimitar of one of them, he sprang upon the Caliph. The servants and courtiers dispersed in the twinkling of an eye, leaving Hadi alone ; he, however, stood firm, until the Kharej was actually upon him, and in act to strike : “ Now, my lads, off with his head ! ” then exclaimed the Caliph ; and, as at these words

the assailant turned to look behind him, he sprang from his saddle, fell upon him, bore him to the ground, and grasping his hand, wrested from him the scimitar and slew him. This done, he remounted his ass; and his followers, servants, and courtiers came trooping back again, all eagerly unsheathing their swords, and filled with shame and terror at what had occurred. The Caliph said not a word to them, but from that day forward he never appeared without his sword, nor rode any other animal than a horse. This anecdote shows that strength of mind, a correct eye, quick witted sagacity, courage, and personal vigour were the gifts which God bestowed upon Mûsa el Hadi.

§ VII.—FAIR GARDEN, AND EXCELLENT ARENA.¹¹—CHOSROES
ANÛSHIREWÂN'S CAMPAIGN IN INDIA.

It is related that Chosroes Anûshirewân had heard much of the fame of one of the border countries of India, adjoining the Kingdom of Babel, which was celebrated for the beauty of its scenery, the mildness of its climate, the sweetness of its waters, the vast amount of its revenues,

the abundance of its fruits, the number of its towns and villages, and the strength of its fortified places. Moreover, the inhabitants had been represented to Chosroes as being a tall and vigorous race, but dull, and of limited understanding, submitting patiently to social discipline, obedient to their sovereigns, and very easily governed. Hence, he conceived a great desire to possess himself of the country, and to turn to his own profit a nation thus constituted.

It was said : Covetousness is the most heinous of all vices. Avarice is the father that begot it; injustice the son to which it gives birth; the desire of that which belongs to others, its brother ;¹² and servility its companion.

It was said : He who desires too much will obtain that which he abhors.

Covetousness is a vice which has its origin in nature, and is excited by the temptation of opportunity.

The heart of Chosroes being set upon obtaining possession of that country, he enquired by whom it was held, and learned that it belonged to one of the most powerful princes of India ;¹³ a young man

enslaved by his own passions, and addicted to a voluptuous life, but who adhered strictly to the path of justice, from which he never swerved, walked in the ways of liberality, whence he never deviated; and by his mildness had gained the hearts of all his subjects, whose hopes were fixed upon him alone. Chosroes, therefore, dispatched to the court of this prince one of his most trusty retainers, who had made courts and the science of government his study; a man, cunning and quick-witted, prudent in design and well versed in artifice, whom he commissioned to make himself acquainted with the roads, the frontiers, and the fortresses; to discover the weak points of the kingdom, and to inquire into the character both of the sovereign and of the people. By this messenger, Chosroes despatched a letter to the Indian prince, demanding homage of him, and warning him that, in the event of a refusal, he should be made to feel the weight of his arms.

The ambassador took his departure, and having reached the court of the Indian prince, the latter lodged him sumptuously, and supplied him abundantly with garments and other articles of luxury,"

but at the same time took every precaution to cut him off from the means of obtaining information, and to prevent all intercourse between him and the citizens. He himself never gave audience to the ambassador, nor demanded his credentials, nor even inquired for what purpose he was come. Lastly, he set one of the most astute of his courtiers to keep watch over him, charging him to make himself acquainted, as far as possible, with the affairs of the ambassador, and to discover what were his designs, and with whom he associated.

The spy set himself at once to work, and began by hiring a shop opposite to the dwelling of the ambassador of Chosroes, which he stocked with earthenware, and then took up his post there, as if for the purpose of selling his goods. He presently observed a servant, whom the ambassador employed to do his business and errands, and wait upon him at home. He, therefore, began to make advances to him, always asking him whether he could render him any service; so that the unsuspecting youth soon contracted a friendship for the Indian, and began to frequent the shop, when he would take a seat, and sometimes ask a favour

when he had need of anything. Thus the spy continued to hold intercourse with him for a long time without making any enquiry concerning his master. When at length he believed the young man to have been lulled into perfect security, he one day said to him, "Well, now, tell me who you are, and whom you go to visit in that house?" "How!" replied the youth; "have you been associating with me ever since such and such a day, and do you not yet know who I am?" "No, indeed I do not," answered the spy. "I am in the service of the ambassador of Chosroes," returned the youth, "and my master lodges over the way." "And who is this Chosroes, and what is his ambassador?" asked the spy. The servant made answer, "Chosroes is the king of Babel, and has sent my master to the king of this country." "The name of Babel," resumed the other, "is not new to me, for in my youth I was in the service of a native of that country." This said, he held his peace, and for several days asked the youth no farther question.

It is said: Diligent search leads to discovery. Inquiry makes even the cunning to waver.

It was said: Small blame to thee if thou holdest him who bestows his confidence too readily, for a fool; him who cannot keep a secret without revealing it, for a babbler; him who gives counsel unasked, for a deceiver; and him who seeks to discover what is withheld from him, for an evil-minded person."

The spy then said to the servant, "Can you not contrive to point your master out to me as he comes forth from his house?" "But he never goes out." "Is he ill, then?" "No, indeed; but your king does not choose that he should go out, nor that any one should enter into his house." On hearing this the spy began to weep. "What is the matter?" asked the youth; and he replied, "I am moved to tears by compassion for the life your master leads; for I know something of it by experience. I was once cast into prison for debt, where even my wife was forbidden to come to me; and if God had not in his mercy granted me the company of another prisoner, who afforded me some solace by his conversation and his friendship, I should undoubtedly have died of grief. I suppose, of course, it is you who entertain your master

by your discourse?" "I should not know how to do so," replied the youth, "nor should I have anything new to relate to him." "Indeed! but am not I here to give you instructions?" asked the spy; and the young man having replied that he willingly accepted the offer, he continued, "Well, then, when you go out, you should contrive to go about the city a little, and take notice of what meets your eye. If you see a group of people conversing together, seek to join them, sit down amongst them, and hear what they are talking about; and then, when you go back to your master, and are alone with him, say, 'To-day I have seen so and so, and have heard such and such discourse.' By this means his mind will be diverted, and some amusement afforded him in his solitude, and you yourself will rise in your master's favour."

The young man followed this counsel to the letter; and no sooner had the ambassador heard him, than he asked, "Who was it who gave you this idea?" "It came into my head, and so I did it," was the answer. "Not so," returned the ambassador; "you have not brains enough for

that. Come, tell me who suggested it?" "A neighbour of ours who sells earthenware," replied the servant, "and who is the most ignorant simpleton I ever saw." "And why do you think him such a simpleton?" "Because," replied the servant, "I had been acquainted with him for more than a month before he knew who I was, or who was my master. Besides, when I talked to him of King Chosroes, he did not even know his name." These words excited the suspicion of the ambassador, and led him to think that the dealer in earthenware might be a spy set to watch him, since he feigned such excessive ignorance and simplicity.

It was said: He who goes too far forward is no better than he who lingers behind; and he who strives to send an arrow to too great a distance shoots below the mark.

Nothing can reveal the circumstances in which a man is placed more plainly than his own words.

If your ears do not enable you to know a man when you are absent from him, neither will your eyes do so when you see him face to face.

The ambassador having listened to the discourse of his slave, said to him, "Bring this man to me to-morrow ; perhaps the sight of him may be a relief to me, and I may derive some profit from his stories." On the following day, therefore, the young man went in quest of the spy, and informed him of his master's wish, in which, after some pretended repugnance, he acquiesced.* Immediately on beholding him, the ambassador was confirmed in the suspicion he had conceived. He sought, therefore, to attract him, and draw him out, feigning himself as foolish and ignorant as possible ; and entreating him to come often to visit him. The spy, therefore, fastened himself on to him, kept watch at his ease over all the ambassador's proceedings both by day and night ; and when he believed himself to have ascertained as much as was necessary, he went to his sovereign, and told him that the ambassador of Chosroes was a clod and an ass, without the slightest wit or penetration, skilled in horsemanship and the use of arms, brave, proud, and nothing more ; and the prince, trusting to this report, pictured

* I here adopt the reading of S. A. 536.

the ambassador to himself, such as the spy had represented him.

It was said : Give not ear to the first speaker, nor trust the first who joins himself to your company.

As truth and falsehood may occasionally bring you the same tale, it is acting the part of a fool to accept or reject it without examination.

News is deserving of credit, in proportion to the understanding, rather than to the veracity of him who retails it.

The interpretation of which maxim is this : that the truthful narrator, if he have no understanding, is liable to be mistaken, as well as to be imposed upon by designing persons. His truth and trustworthiness are only a warrant that he will not alter that which he repeats, but cannot confer the penetration required to fathom that which he beholds. A truthful but unobservant man, fixing his eyes upon the sun, may tell you that it does not move ; or looking at the moon, when the clouds are sweeping across her, may assert that she is proceeding with augmented speed upon her course. Likewise, gazing from the deck of

a vessel under sail, he may think it is the sea which is flowing from beneath it ; or being present at the sports of the conjuror, his statement of what he has seen will differ widely from the reality. Even as, hearing the voice of a parrot behind a curtain, he would maintain that he had heard that of a man. Thus, he will fall into falsehood, not by voluntary misrepresentation of the truth, but by incapacity to perceive it.

The Indian prince, trusting thus blindly to the words of the spy, summoned the ambassador of Chosroes to his presence, treated him with great honour, conversed with him courteously, presented him with costly garments and other splendid gifts, and sent him away well pleased to his own dwelling. At the same time, he gave him leave to go wherever he pleased, and permitted all who chose to visit him. Thus, lavishing gifts and favours upon him, he kept him a whole twelve-month at his court, then sent for him, gave him the answer to his credentials, and charged him with magnificent presents for Chosroes. It is said that amongst them was a scimitar five spans in length, of the colour of red copper, and of such

exquisite temper, that it would cut through iron as an ordinary sword might cut through lead. There was, likewise, a small turquoise plate, capable of containing a measure¹⁶ of corn, a chrysolite cup,¹⁷ which could hold a *ratl*¹⁸ of liquid, and a chandelier of beryl,¹⁹ in which was encased a ruby as large as a dove's egg, which, if hung up at night in a room in which was a lamp, reflected its rays in such a manner, upon every object presented to the cone of red light, that you would have believed them to be red also. He added a thousand large pearls,²⁰ and a great quantity of perfumes, cuirasses, shields, and other similar articles. Lastly, he bestowed on the ambassador himself gems and other valuable gifts, and sent him back to his own sovereign.

He, having presented himself before Chosroes, and being questioned by him as to the result of his mission, described to the king the beauty of the country, the precious things which therein abounded, its manifold advantages, and the strength of its frontiers; adding, that for those who should seek to attack it, its only weak point was the simplicity of the inhabitants,

easy to be cajoled, and devoid of foresight ; which simplicity, as it rendered them tractable to the authority which they were accustomed to obey, gave reason to hope that it would be easy for another to alienate their affections from their sovereign, and attract them to himself, by dispersing emissaries amongst them who should win them over by an artful system of proselytising²¹ in favour of another government. The people being thus shaken in their allegiance to their prince, the latter would have no means of resistance, as his only strength consisted in the arms of his subjects, who afforded him a plentiful harvest in time of peace, and naked swords in time of war.²²

Chosroes, having read the letters of the Indian prince, perceived them to be written in a tone of great courtesy, and could not but acknowledge the dignity and gentleness with which peace and friendship were requested from him. Nevertheless, he called a council of his viziers, and informed them that he did not feel himself by any means disposed to grant such peace. Their opinion was contrary to his own; but Chosroes, notwithstanding,

determined upon sending back the presents of the Indian monarch. This done, he began the task of corrupting his subjects, by summoning to his court men skilled in the art of proselytising in favour of new sovereigns and of paving the way for changes of dynasty, provided them with money and with everything needful, and gave them minute instructions concerning the course they should pursue.²³

They, having entered the kingdom aforesaid, dispersed themselves as Chosroes had directed, and set about the performance of their task with all diligence. At the end of two years it was accomplished, both in the metropolis, and in the other cities, villages, and fortified places ; whereupon they wrote to Chosroes, who committed the charge of making the necessary preparations to the satrap who governed that quarter of the kingdom which marched upon the Indian frontier : for the kingdom of Babel was divided into four provinces, each of which was governed by a satrap, who commanded a force of fifty thousand combatants.²⁴

Now, when the satrap began to levy troops, and prepare for war, the spies maintained in those

countries by the Indian prince, informed their sovereign of the fact by letter ; while, at the same time with these movements of the enemy, the king learnt that rumours of them were already rife amongst his own subjects, that many reports were abroad, and that the disaffected were beginning to discover themselves. Thus aroused from his lethargy, he inquired into the real state of affairs, and soon discovered the truth.

It was said that revolutions aiming at a change of government are usually effected against sovereigns upon whom the crown has devolved by hereditary right, and who hence having been brought up in the midst of pleasure, are inclined to sloth, and are persuaded that a capacity for governing is inherent in themselves, and that the virtues of their illustrious ancestors still continue in operation, without any necessity for exertion on their own parts.²⁵

The government of this state devolved upon five persons ; namely, four viziers, and the chief priest of the Magi and of the followers of that religion, who presided over the temples of the Sacred Fire. Having assembled these five, the prince imparted

to them the tidings he had received, of the disaffection of his subjects, and of the armaments of the satrap, stating, in conclusion, that he had need of their assistance. They thereupon, being seated in council to discuss the measures to be taken, one of the viziers spoke thus :—

“It appears to me that the king ought to endeavour to conciliate his subjects, and fill their hands with wealth, and their hearts with hope ; so that those who have fallen away should return to the straight path, and those who now fly like wild animals should become tame. The enemy, perceiving this, will either not venture to attack us, or if he does so, we shall make head against him, with one mind and with united forces.”

“That,” replied the chief priest of the Magi,²⁶ “would be a very good plan, if the disaffection of the subjects were the result of tyranny, or even of any misconduct on the part of the government ; for then, the cause of the evil being removed, all would return to their duty. But the king’s subjects are not in such a case. Their discontent arises from ignorance of the immutable principles of truth and justice,²⁷ and from

the arrogance engendered by a long course of prosperity.

“ It is said, that four kinds of people when spoiled by arrogance, will only become worse if they are treated with mildness ; namely, children, wives, servants, and subjects ; and this has passed into a proverb. Likewise the four most ignoble passions of the soul overstep in their ardour the limits of propriety : and these are, anger, when it passes the bounds of valour and indignation against vice ; sensual pleasures, when they do not confine themselves to that which is requisite for the recreation of the mind after the exertion of profound study ; greediness of wealth exceeding need ; and idleness, extending beyond the repose required for the body, wearied by its efforts to procure the comforts of life. These four passions, when they overstep the limits aforesaid, will never be brought back within them by gentleness and kindness, but will, on the contrary, be rendered thereby only the more violent and impetuous.. Those who are afflicted by such plagues can only be cured by fire and steel.”

“ The sage is right,” replied the prince. Another vizier spoke in this wise : “ Let us rather

employ the subjects who remain faithful to us, in restraining those who are gone astray, and bringing them back by force into the right path ; so that as regards them we may be safe. Then we will advance against the enemy with troops, whose tried fidelity admits of no suspicion ; for we shall assuredly be compelled to fight, since we have to deal with a foe who will not be content until he has taken from us all that we possess, and left us bereft of everything.”

And the high priest of the Magi replied : “ This would do the enemy more service than all his hosts, and would procure him partisans far more numerous than his emissaries can succeed in gaining.²⁸ We know that amongst the people there are not wanting men of ability, but at the same time poor, whom fear alone has hitherto withheld from drawing their swords. Now, if the king should act according to your counsel, it would be the means of placing the sword in the hands of those who would assuredly unsheath it, not for us, but against us. The mass would follow their example, owing to the natural feeling which causes kings to be regarded with envy, and the unfortunate with

favour. Moreover, it would withdraw the populace, the merchants, the artisans, and the domestic servants from their own class, and transfer them to the military order ; whereas their bosoms are not filled with that enthusiasm which leads the soldier to sacrifice his life in order to enhance the glory of his sovereign. Hence it is that the monarchs of old strictly restrained their subjects, each one within the limits of his own caste, in order to make them abandon the idea of rising from it into another. *

“ Philosophers have said that there are four things which to confront by force and with violence, in the four following conditions, will cost you your life ; and these are, the king in his anger, the torrent which has burst its banks, the elephant in the pairing season, and the people in a state of excitement and tumult.

“ They have said, moreover, that the measure which most resembles the forcible repression of the people, when it rises in its fury, is that of driving in the small-pox with astringent ointment, when it shows itself upon the skin.”

And the king replied, “ The sage is right.”

* Here ends the variation of S. A. 536, which begins at note 28.

The third vizier then spoke: "In the first place," said he, "we ought to effect a scrutiny of the people in order to acquaint ourselves with those who are disaffected, and to separate them from the rest. We will then examine into the condition of each of the suspected persons, and according as he is poor or rich, noble or of low degree, powerful or of no account, we will adopt towards him the measures that may be most fitting."

"We are come to such a pass," said the high priest of the Magi, "that an inquisition of this kind would lead to great danger; for those obnoxious to suspicion would be so alarmed by it, as instantly to unite themselves to the enemy; whom they would assist with counsel and information as to our most vulnerable points, and would fight for him with a zeal far exceeding his own; as people who would dare anything in order to return to their country, their families, and their property; inducements which are altogether wanting to the foe. Moreover, in cases of civil dissension, those who are obnoxious to suspicion do not in general go over to the enemy, but resist us without leaving their own homes; or else discover themselves more openly by increasing to our detriment

the number of their fellow-subjects who are declared rebels, and affording them assistance, without on that account sharing their opinions, but rather from love of class. [There are amongst subjects those who hate the government on account of some rebuff that they have experienced, and those who do so on account of punishment inflicted. Then the lower classes in general abhor the military, at whose hands they are frequently subjected to outrage and oppression. But if the latter are treated with gentleness, the whole nation finds fault with the sovereign. If he seek to punish the wicked, the upright fear that the punishment may extend to them, and make common cause with the froward, even although the latter should oppress them.]* In like manner, we may see two angry dogs, though excited against each other, if they behold a wolf, lay aside their own quarrel and together rush upon him, helping each other, like trusty comrades, to do him hurt, regardless of the canine nature shared by the wolf; and heeding only his peculiar qualities: his wildness, evil odour, and ferocity. Thus the mass of the people do not look upon the king as a member of the human

* This fragment is found in S. A. 536 alone.

family, but consider only his peculiar characteristics; his isolation, his dignity, and the elevation of his office; and therefore they turn against him, and unite with those who are on a level with themselves; [as, for example, in ignorance, and other similar qualities. Nor is there, in general, wanting amongst them some blind fanatic, who, professing to open his mouth in defence of religion, oversteps his duty as a subject, and rules the people with an authority more absolute than that even of the sovereign himself over the military orders.]*

“ Wise men have said, there are three kinds of human beings, whom if you would put them to the test under three particular circumstances, you would deserve to lose; and these are, the pedagogue, if you seek to make trial of his learning, while you are but a scholar, and of no estimation; an intimate friend, if, being poor and having need of him, you would put his liberality to the proof; and a woman, if you would try her love by marrying her when your hair is turning grey: which things have given rise to the saying—‘ To try the stomach of one who is convalescent with food too heavy for him.’

* This passage is found in S. A. 536 alone.

[“Now, to put your subjects to^a trial in the present instance, would precisely resemble the tests aforesaid. The wise have said, moreover, that governments, like individuals, may be attacked by maladies which threaten their dissolution. And the chief perils which they have to encounter are four in number; first, the pride, and, secondly, the ire of the king,—which two vices so disturb the march of government, as to cause the monarch to overstep the bounds of policy; thirdly, rapacity, which leads to abuse of power, and violence on the part of the monarch; and, fourthly, rebellion on that of the subjects.”]*

And the king made answer, “The sage is right.” Then the fourth vizier, who was esteemed above all the rest for the far-sightedness and sagacity of his counsel, said: “I will only relate to the king a story which I learned from my preceptor, and which was the last lesson that he imparted to me, adding, ‘Seek to lay it up in the lowest depths of your heart, and hope that you may not live to see the day in which you shall have need of it.’ But that day, as I perceive, is come.”

“Speak, for we are listening,” returned the

* This passage is found in S. A. 536 alone.

king; and the chief priest of the Magi added: "What acuteness of understanding!" "Very true," replied the three other viziers, with one voice; and the fourth continued thus:

"We are as the fingers of the hand, which have need of one another, and mutually assist each other; but we all obtain light from the understanding of the serene prince, upon whom our eyes are turned, even as the most brilliant stars derive their radiance from the sun; for we all have need of the king, and derive our prosperity from him."

"Oh, faithful minister," said the king, "proceed, for your words are welcome to our ears, and likewise those of any one who shall speak by your mouth. From you also we receive assistance and upright counsel, even as does the soul from the five senses."

At these words all bowed down before the king, and the vizier continued:—

§ VIII.—THE RAT AND THE GERBOA.²⁹

My preceptor imagined that a rich merchant had in his house a room with a loft over it, into which he occasionally went. The empty space between the roof and the ceiling was inhabited by a quantity

of rats, who led the most prosperous and jovial life that could be, in the midst of safety and plenty ; for all day long they enjoyed themselves quietly, and at night-fall they came down from the roof and dispersed themselves through the warehouses of the merchant, and the apartments of the servants, gnawing and carrying away whatever they chose. The merchant was already growing displeased at this annoyance, when one day having entered the room aforesaid, he there laid himself down to reflect upon his affairs. The rats, meanwhile, who were amusing themselves above the ceiling, began to shake down some dust through the fissures of the boards ; upon which the merchant, starting up angrily, had all the furniture immediately removed from the room, and then called his slaves to take down the boards of the ceiling. This done, the rats dispersed themselves over the house, and all met with a cruel death, with the exception of two only, a male and a female, who happened to be absent.

They returning home, and beholding the devastation of their colony, and the rats lying dead about the house, were grievously afflicted ; and the male Rat, therefore, turning to his companion,

observed, "The wise man was right when he said, that he who is wrapped up in the things of this world, and puts his trust in them, is like one who lies down to sleep in the shade before the sun has reached the meridian; and the shadows becoming shorter by degrees, leave him exposed to the rays of the sun, until, scorched by the heat, he can find no shade, nor any trace of it."³⁰

"Very true," replied his companion; "but what do you purpose doing?"

"I purpose not to remain in the place where this fearful catastrophe has occurred, but to fly the face of man to the utmost of my power; for the fury of man is more terrible, and his cunning more subtle than that of any other animal."

"I will go with you," said the female; and having set forth, they reached an extensive region peopled by animals of various kinds, in the midst of which was a valley carpeted with green pastures, and diversified with little lakes inhabited by frogs and tortoises. Struck with admiration of the scene, the two Rats began to examine the valley in search of a spot where to make their habitation; and having reached a knoll that rose in its centre,

flanked on either side by the beds of torrents, they burrowed a hole at the foot of the slope, and being well pleased with it, took up their abode there.

It happened one day that having ascended the hill, they found on the summit a Gerboa peering out of the mouth of his hole, who, having bid them welcome, and entered into discourse with them, inquired of them concerning their state. The two Rats thereupon related to him their adventures up to the time when they had come to inhabit the hole at the foot of the hill. "If," said the Gerboa, "those who take upon themselves to give advice to others did not, in general, excite mistrust, I would give you a warning." "We have no need of your warning," replied the Rats; and the Gerboa resumed:—

"It was said, there are four undertakings in which you should not adventure yourself without taking the advice of experienced persons:—Do not go to market without first asking whether business is brisk, or whether people are standing with folded arms; do not ask a woman in marriage without having made inquiry concerning her family

and her disposition ; do not enter upon a journey without ascertaining whether the road you purpose to travel be safe or hazardous ; nor take up your abode in a country without having made yourself acquainted with the advantages it has to offer, the character of the sovereign by whom it is governed, the divisions which may exist between its inhabitants, and the strength of the secret or open enemies of the nation.

“ Attend to him who offers you advice ; if that which he gives would be injurious to others without being of service to yourself, then know that he is a villain ; if it be injurious to others, but beneficial to yourself, then be sure that he is an ambitious man ; but if it be beneficial to yourself, and hurtful to none, then give ear to the counsellor, and have confidence in him.

“ If a man give you counsel, and you do not aid him to conquer yourself, he will be in the case of a man attempting to straighten a rafter which had been already warped before it was fitted into the place where it is fixed.

“ If you would know whether the good or bad principle prevails in the mind of a man, ask of him

a counsel; for, in the advice he gives you, he will show himself in his true light.

“Amongst the varieties of character that are to be found amongst men, the worst is that which is assumed where it exists not in reality; because, by this assumption, you only increase your own defects, as is the case when the weak man endeavours to feign strength, the ignorant learning, and the poor man wealth.

“It was said, moreover: when you need counsel in any matter of business, always apply to shrewd and experienced persons of your own class and profession; and take heed that you do not pass them over in order to consult such as belong to another order; for they, living in a different world which knows nothing of the peculiarities of your condition, would withdraw you from the limits of your proper sphere.

“Know, therefore,” continued the Gerboa, “that I am united to you by that similarity of instinct, which leads us both to burrow for ourselves a hole, only that I excel you in the art, and have more experience of this country, with which I am perfectly acquainted. And there is a saying that a

country is the death of him who knows it not ; but he who knows it can do with it what he pleases.³¹ Therefore I say to you, give up this hole of yours, and seek another spot in which to take up your abode."

But the two Rats left him and went away laughing, and mocking at him, accusing him of dotage and stupidity; and returned to their dwelling in which they lived for a long time, and reared many young ones. One day, however, that the male rat had gone out to attend to some business he had in the country, he found on his return that the torrent had inundated the valley surrounding the knoll, and risen so high that it appeared to be standing in the midst of a raging sea. The unhappy wretch halted on the brink, loudly bewailing his misery, as he watched the ruin of his dwelling, the destruction of his helpmate and his offspring, and the waste of the provisions which he had laid up.

Then perceiving the Gerboa standing in perfect security on the summit of the knoll, the latter called out to him: "Holloa, you rat! what think you of the fruit of your imprudence, which made you despise the counsels of an upright and experienced

person?" "That it is very bitter," replied the Rat. And the Gerboa resumed: "Do not, however, on that account distress yourself so much, but cease your lamentations: the good fortune of being left alive yourself, is greater than the calamity which has bereft you of your family. If, therefore, you seek to allure her by thankfulness, good fortune will come to you, and you will enjoy her favour.

"It was said, three things* you should meet with a smiling face: a friend, a debtor, and good fortune.

"A lofty spirit will not forget to be grateful, whatever wrong he may receive from one to whom he owes a benefit.

"If a man has done you a benefit, and then turns his back upon you, or even injures you, do not on that account break with him; but continue to show him gratitude and affection. Such conduct on your part will prove the most powerful intercessor in your behalf."

"Unhappy that I am," replied the Rat, "that I would not listen to you, and withdrew myself from you! It is rightly said, that he who has understanding should associate with the wise, who observe the precepts of philosophy, and conduct

themselves prudently: and if I had been reasonable, I should have perceived that you, O sage gerboa! oppressed as you are with years and infirmity, would not have exposed yourself to the fatigue of ascending and descending this steep acclivity, had you not been prompted to do so by wisdom and the counsels of prudence."

He then waited till the waters should subside, when ascending the hill, he found a hole close to that of the gerboa, where he dwelt in happiness and security.³²

§ IX.—CONTINUATION OF THE ENTERPRISE OF CHOSROES.

"This," said the vizier, in conclusion, "is what my preceptor related to me."

"O faithful minister," replied the king, "your words are true, your counsel to the purpose, the course you propose straight, your diction pointed and elegant, compelling the attention of the hearers. But now, seek to find the hill which we may willingly ascend to establish our abode upon its summit, taking courage to endure the fatigue of the ascent, and the weariness of the isolation we shall there experience, when deprived of the pleasures to

which our soul has been accustomed, in the world of delight in which it has hitherto disported itself. Oh, that we might thus find, in the midst of the flood of rebellion, the same safety which was attained by the gerboa !”

And the vizier returned : “ O serene prince, may the loyalty of the faithful save you from death and tribulation, and may you live so long as it pleases you, and obtain the accomplishment of all your desires ! Marvellous is the prudence with which you grasp at this resource which we have come to set before you and which is assuredly yours, and marvellous the portion of your own wisdom which we have recalled to your own knowledge. In one of the provinces of your kingdom, I am acquainted with a fortress, from which you look down upon all the nations of the earth, even as Saturn exalts himself above all the stars.” A fortress which neither the most piercing glances, nor the most ambitious thoughts can reach, and which enjoys, moreover, the purest air,* and waters like those of Paradise,† and encloses within its

* Or “an air for the healing of the sick.”

† *Salsabil*, a fountain of Paradise, but not of the Indian paradise.

limits gardens shaded by groves of trees, and every species of luxury. One of your earliest ancestors, most serene prince, expended much care upon it, and would have completed the fortifications, but that his hopes were cut short by the inexorable and irresistible power which severs the links of life.* Now it would be an admirable expedient for the king to complete the work of his predecessor, and then to deposit his treasure in the fortress and place it in a state of effectual defence. He might then go forth to meet the enemy, should they advance into the kingdom; and, if before doing so, any symptoms of treachery should manifest themselves in the army, he might take refuge in this stronghold, with all who retained their faith and allegiance to him, there to abide in patience, and wait his opportunity."

The prince was filled with joy on receiving this intimation from the vizier; and mounting on horseback, with a troop of courtiers and trusty adherents, he proceeded forthwith to the fortress pointed out to him. When he beheld it with his

* The following passage to the end of the paragraph is taken from S. A. 536,

own eyes, he esteemed it even superior to the description given of it by the vizier, and found solid foundations laid, and remains of ancient masonry erected in the time of one of his ancestors; so that he immediately sent thither engineers, artisans, and superintendents, charging them to use their utmost diligence to complete the works; and meanwhile began transporting thither all that he dearly valued of his treasures, warlike stores, and most precious possessions. He demanded from his subjects what he esteemed a sufficient supply of rice, both thrashed and unthrashed; this latter, because rice in the husk will keep for a longer period. He, besides, made every preparation for his residence in the fortress; ordered the requisite supplies to be collected in the provinces of the kingdom; summoned the forces to take up arms; and caused the strongholds to be put in repair.

Three months had elapsed since the spies had given notice of the hostile preparations of the satrap, when the latter assaulted the frontiers with an innumerable host, abundantly provided with all the implements of war. At the same

time, the name of Chosroes being proclaimed in the province amongst the inhabitants already corrupted by the Persian emissaries, the rebels occupied the whole of the surrounding country. The satrap entrusted the government of it to one of his prefects, in whom he reposed implicit confidence ; and ordered it to be garrisoned by a mixed force, composed of his own soldiers and of the people of the country. Then penetrating further into the interior of the kingdom, he was confronted by the Indian army, in the ranks of which were not wanting those who fought with great valour ; but such as had treachery in their hearts having taken to flight, carried away with them even the faithful in the rout ; and thus the army fell into the hands of the satrap, who spared the lives of his prisoners, but seized the booty ; and continuing his advance effected the occupation of the entire country.

On the first hostile attack, the Indian prince had sent his family and the court to the fortress aforesaid, and then assembling the principal citizens of the capital, had reminded them, in grave and earnest terms, of the benefits they had received

from him. He spoke of the rebellious humours which he had of late detected; but added that his spirit shrank from the idea of making an inquisitorial examination of his subjects, and consigning the guilty to punishment. On hearing these words, the citizens repented them of their intrigues against such a prince, and solemnly swore to be faithful and obedient, but he interrupted them: "It is not for this that I have summoned you. I have no intention of turning my back upon the enemy; nor do I despair of overcoming him and obtaining a complete victory; much less do I cherish suspicions against any amongst you. But one of my most trusty viziers has reminded me that one of the kings, my ancestors, had undertaken the construction of a fortress, upon which he had bestowed much pains, when that dissolution which must of necessity overtake every human being of a compound nature, prevented the completion of his work. Hence the vizier exhorted me to carry out that which my ancestor had begun; according to the saying of the philosopher, that the most pious prince is he who executes the purpose of his ancestors, and the most evil-minded, he who suffers

it to fail. I have thought fit to lay up my treasures and supplies in this fortress, in accordance with another wise saying, to the effect, that the most prudent amongst rulers is he who deliberately provides against every contingency which the mind of man can foresee.

“The philosophers have likewise said : It is the king’s duty to provide that he may never lack five things. The first of these is a faithful vizier, from whose counsel he may seek assistance, in good as well as in adverse fortune. The second, a sharp sword, of which the temper may be his defence when his enemies prevail against him. The third, a fleet courser, to whose speed he may commit himself when further resistance is impossible. The fourth, a beautiful woman, whose love may preserve him spotless both in thought and deed.* The fifth, an impregnable fortress, in which to take refuge when encompassed about by the enemy.

“In order, therefore, to sustain the full splendour of the monarchy, I have resolved to take up my abode in the stronghold aforesaid; and I have

* I have not here adhered to the letter of the Arabic original.

already sent hither my treasures, and all that I esteem most highly. Those who are firmly resolved to imitate my example, may follow me.”

Having thus concluded his speech, he dismissed them, and all those amongst them who had either sense or experience; adopted the measure proposed by the king, and despatched their families, their goods, and their provisions to the fortress.

The satrap, meanwhile, was scouring the kingdom, and occupying it, even as the angel, Sijill,³⁴ rolls up the leaves; and every hostile force that opposed him was put to flight. But having reached the capital, he encamped at the distance of a parasang* from it, not venturing to assault it. The Indian prince had commanded the citizens to go forth to battle; and a great concourse of people had gone forth accordingly, as well as the sovereign, in person, at the head of four thousand combatants, between slaves, officers of the court, and other faithful partisans. With this band, he took up his post apart without the city, not suffering these, his immediate followers, to mingle either with the army, or with the burgher militia. He

* The parasang is about four-fifths of a French league.

then placed the elephants in battle array, and marshalled his forces.

Now, there were in the capital two emissaries of Chosroes, who sought to make use of what appeared to them the favourable opportunity of the absence of the king, and so soon as he was gone forth, raised a tumult, and, followed by their partisans, fell upon the lieutenant of the king, killed him, took possession of the capital, and fortified themselves within it. The king was in the camp, when he beheld the chief priest of the Magi, coming to him barefoot, and with his head uncovered, tearing his hair, and smiting his face. He immediately caused him to mount on his own elephant, and having interrogated him, the high priest imparted to him the tidings of the loss of his capital, and the revolt of the people.

The prince, therefore, with his own followers, immediately marched in the direction of the fortress aforesaid, and as many as were really loyal and faithful followed on his track. The satrap being apprised of this movement, sent forth some squadrons of horse in pursuit, who overtook them; but the king encountered them bravely, repulsed

them, and continued his march, until at length he reached the citadel.

Meanwhile, the satrap having advanced upon the capital, entered it, appointed an administration, and then moved with his army in the direction of the stronghold in which the king had sought refuge. Having reached it, he beheld the splendid and imposing spectacle of a fortress not only impregnable, but so formidable, that he durst not even encamp against it within a certain distance. Retiring, therefore, a little way, he pitched his tents in a strong position, where he remained cautiously on the watch. Lastly, he wrote a letter to the Indian king, couched in terms of respect and reverence, and proposing to him conditions, of which the sum total was, that full and honourable restitution should be made to him of his throne and kingdom, provided only he would recognise the supremacy of Chosroes, and swear fealty to him.

The ambassador of the satrap having reached the presence of the Indian king, the latter not only refused to give him audience, but would not even receive the letter, and sent him back to him from

whom he came. Thus, the satrap lost all hope of bringing him to terms.

It was said : If you so much as bestow a look upon your enemy, you lose your own advantage ; and if you give ear to his words, you submit yourself to him.

By showing a friendly countenance to the enemy, you expose yourself to the risk of being submerged in his sea, and of falling into the snares of his witchcraft.

When a man stoops to listen to his enemy, what marvel if he obtain nothing from him ? ³⁵

He who cannot resist the temptation of parleying with the enemy, is incapable of guarding himself against his stratagems.

The satrap having thereupon returned to the capital, wrote to Chosroes, informing him of his success, and of his ulterior hopes and fears. To which Chosroes replied, by ordering him to hold the places he had occupied, and to defer the attack upon the fortress until it should appear that the troops of the besieged prince were beginning to lose courage ; and meanwhile to keep a strict watch over him and surround him on every side

with advanced posts; which orders were punctually executed by the satrap.

In the meantime, the Persian strangers began to wax insolent in the conquered kingdom, and to treat the people with a harshness and violence totally foreign to the Indian character. Thus hatred began to rankle in their bosoms; and the jealousy of all was excited when they perceived that the revenues derived from the soil were withdrawn from the country, for the profit not of the natives but of foreigners. They hence learned to appreciate the advantages of their former condition, and the comparison only served to make their present sufferings appear the more intolerable. They began to raise their voices boldly, and as the satrap bore with this, fearing to alienate them still further by repressive measures, they only gave their tongues the greater license.

It was said: That subjects first move their tongues and then their hands.³⁶ But the king will not be able to control their tongues, unless he be master of their whole body, nor will he be so unless he can bind their hearts to him in love. But their hearts will never cleave to him: first,

if he does not administer justice impartially, and deal it out in the same measure to high and low ; secondly, if he does not lighten the taxes on provisions and the statute-labour ;³⁷ and thirdly, if he does not exempt his subjects from all augmentation of imposts. And these three causes are in fact those which generate hatred in the higher classes and cause the lower ones to long more ardently to rise to their level.

Subjects are of three kinds. The first are worthy people, trained in the precepts of religion, who recognise the superiority of the king and the importance of the cares which devolve upon him, and therefore feel for him under the weight of the burdens which he has to sustain. The affection of such as these may be conciliated by the king by graciousness and courtesy and benevolent attention to their words and opinions. Amongst the second, we behold an admixture of good and bad, who must, therefore, be held in check by a combination of gentleness and severity. The third is the populace, which always runs after the first who holds out any novelty, without examining either his words or his actions, and

siding with they knew not what. These must be governed by fear, unaccompanied by harshness, and by punishment without excess of rigour.³⁸

To neglect the repression of slight faults, is to encourage the commission of crimes. Thus the dishonour of a woman has its origin in a flattering word addressed to her; and the restiveness of a horse, in a curvette which is suffered to pass unchecked.

The Indian prince having established himself in the fortress, consulted his viziers concerning the line of conduct to be adopted by him; and they recommended him to have patience; not to give way to depression; to execute strict justice; to secure the roads in the neighbourhood of the citadel; to protect whoever should seek refuge with him; to conciliate the alienated affections of his subjects, and always to practise generosity and clemency. These precepts he observed as punctually as if they had been those of the most holy law; so that his good fame increased, and the hearts of his subjects began to incline towards him, and their tongues to bless him.

It came to pass in the meantime, that the prefect appointed by the satrap over one of the frontier districts, conducted himself amiss, and the chief man of the country went to him to warn and admonish him with words of friendly counsel. At this the prefect took umbrage, and wrote a false accusation to the satrap, to the effect that this person always placed himself in opposition to the government, and stirred up the people ; and the satrap replied by commanding that he should be sent to him in chains. The prefect, therefore, caused him to be seized and bound, and was sending him to the satrap under an escort of infantry, when some generous and daring youths of the country, having followed the band, slaughtered the escort and liberated the prisoner. The latter thereupon presented himself before the prefect, and told him what had occurred, and that he had not been able, by any means, to prevent it ; upon which, the prefect commanded his head to be cut off. But when the sentence was executed, the victim being a man of great power and influence, the people of the city rose in rebellion, slew the prefect and most of his soldiers, and assumed a defensive attitude.

The ranks of the rebels were swelled by all who held similar opinions, both in the city and in the fortified places in the vicinity ; and letters having been sent to the neighbouring provinces, they all likewise imitated this example, and expelled the present prefects. Thus, in a very short time, many provinces of the kingdom had renounced their allegiance to Chosroes.

These events having come to the knowledge of the satrap, filled him with terror and amazement. He assembled his slaves, threw supplies into his strongholds, and wrote to Chosroes demanding assistance. There was in the metropolis at this period a vicar of the chief priest of the Magi, who had been elected by the people,³⁹ when the chief priest had departed to follow the king to the fortress. This vicar, a man universally beloved, perceiving that the satrap, filled with alarm and mistrust, had begun to molest the citizens whom he most feared with all manner of punishments and oppressions, determined to seek him. "I am come," said he, "to inquire of you concerning a thing which must be well known to

you." "Say on," replied the satrap; and he continued :

"I have been informed that, amongst the maxims bequeathed in his testament by Ardshir, son of Babek, and king of Babel, is the following : 'The severity of the government often drives the subjects to revolution, of which they had otherwise not thought.'

"Elsewhere in the same testament is written : 'Let him who has seized upon the territory of another never forget by what means and upon what terms he succeeded in obtaining possession of it. Be it known to him, that if he do not rule over it in a manner pleasing to the Almighty Lord, this kingdom shall be taken from him in precisely the same manner, and in virtue of the same conditions, that he obtained possession of it, because both are recorded against him by eternal justice, and his conduct confirms the decree enjoining the liberation of the country from his hands.' It is related that this testament was written in the hall of state of the royal palace, opposite to the throne, and to the spot where Ardshir was in the habit of distributing justice." ⁴⁰

The satrap understood the meaning of the Indian, but wishing to see how far he would go, he merely replied, " So it is."

" Then, since it is so," replied the vicar, " why do you not govern according to these principles, but, on the contrary, oppress the people with tyranny, which has already caused the rebellion of a portion of them, and will cause that of the remainder ? Do you not fear this kingdom may escape from your grasp, in the same manner that it fell into it ? "

On hearing these words, the satrap administered to him so stern and menacing a reproof, that the vicar being aged and infirm, fell to the ground in a swoon, was carried to his own home, and a few days after expired. His death made matters considerably worse ; the language of the people became more threatening, and setting aside every consideration, they broke forth into open hostility against the oppressors. The satrap, indeed, summoned the chief men of the city, and strictly admonished them ; threatening that he would make them feel the weight of the power of Chosroes, and would not shrink from exterminating them, even to

the last man ; but they answered him with honied words, and then effected their escape ; and in the meantime the rebellion in the provinces gathered strength, and the satrap, intent upon fortifying himself in the capital, could take no measures to repress it.

The rebels, meanwhile, despatched a messenger to their rightful sovereign, entreating his forgiveness, and requesting him to send them some leader of distinction, around whom they might rally. The king, thereupon, granted them a general amnesty, and placed over them a prefect whom they invested with unlimited powers, obeying him implicitly, and defending him with the utmost zeal.

The satrap saw himself thus compelled to send forth a detachment of troops against the rebellious provinces ; which, however, soon returned to him defeated and discouraged, obliging him to go forth in person with the army, leaving the capital in a state of defence, under a governor whom he believed capable of holding it in check. The satrap then marched against the insurgents, but no sooner had he quitted the city than the inhabitants rose against

the Persians, slaying some, casting forth the rest, and then fortifying themselves in the capital; which event having been communicated to the satrap, no other resource remained to him, save that of retiring from the kingdom by the nearest road; nor did he halt until, defeated and a fugitive, he reached the presence of Chosroes. The Indian prince on the other hand, returned to his capital, and henceforward not only governed according to the strictest rules of justice, but showed greater firmness in controlling his own passions, and putting in practice that wisdom which he had gained from experience.

§ X.—FAIR GARDEN AND EXCELLENT ARENA. SAYINGS OF A
CITIZEN OF MEDINA TO THE CALIPH OTHMAN IBN AFFAN.⁴¹

I have read that Othman Ibn Affan, being besieged at the time of the rebellion, turned one day to those who were seated around him, and exclaimed: "Oh that a man could be found who would speak to me frankly of myself, and of those by whom I am besieged!" Whereupon a young Ansari⁴² rose and said, "O Prince of the Faithful, I will speak to you concerning both: I say unto

you, that you bow the neck, and therefore they bestride you; that you obey the goad, and therefore they drive you the faster; and it is nothing else than your excessive mildness which has rendered them so daring to your hurt.” “You have spoken truth,” replied the Caliph, “sit down here. And do you know,” continued he, “what it is that kindles revolution?” “Doubtless, I know it, O Prince of the Faithful,” answered the youth: “I once inquired concerning it of an old man of the tribe of Tonûkh, a man of experience, who had visited many countries, and learnt many doctrines: ‘There are two causes,’ said he to me, ‘which give rise to revolutions: the first is partiality, which excites the hatred of the great; and the second, mildness, which encourages the audacity of the populace.’” “And did you ask him,” continued Othman, “what should be done to crush them?” “Yes,” resumed the youth, “and he told me that seditions may be checked at their commencement by the correction of the Sovereign’s own faults, and by extending equally to all the nobles the favour which had hitherto been shown only to a few. But when the rebellion has gathered strength, there is

no other remedy than firmness; or, to speak more properly, patience." "And I," said the Caliph, "will wait with patience until God, the most righteous of judges, shall decide between me and mine enemies."

§ XI.—SAYINGS OF A PHILOSOPHER TO YEZDEJIRD II., KING
OF PERSIA.⁴³

To the same purport is the anecdote related by the Persians concerning Yezdejird, son of Bahram, who, having asked of a sage philosopher in what good government consisted, the latter replied: "In benevolence towards subjects, in taking from them, without violence, what is justly due; in conciliating their hearts by equity; in rendering the roads secure; and in rendering justice to those who have received injury against those who have done them wrong." "And who is a virtuous monarch?" asked Yezdejird again. And the philosopher replied: "If the ministers are good, the king will be good likewise." "O Philosopher," resumed the king, "the people have already entered upon the path of revolutions; explain to us now whence they arise, and how they may be quenched

when once kindled.” “They have their origin in heart-burnings,” was the reply, “and the audacity of the people causes them to break forth. The insolence of the great gives birth to revolutions ; and they are encouraged by the readiness of the tongue to express the imaginings of the mind, the timidity of the rich, and the confidence of the poor, the carelessness of those who enjoy, and the wakefulness of those who suffer.” “And what is it that can quench them, O Philosopher !” added Yezdejird ; and the philosopher made answer, “They may be quenched, O King ! by providing in time against that which you have reason to fear ; and, having wasted your time in idleness, by applying yourself earnestly to business, acting according to a steadfast purpose, arming yourself with patience as with a cuirass, and resigning yourself to the decrees of Fate.”

CHAPTER IV.

CONTENTMENT.

§ I.—VERSES OF THE KORAN.

GOD, whose name be blessed, hath said, concerning those who murmured against his judgments and ordinances, and could ill endure the division of the tithes and booty ordained by him :

“ If they receive part thereof, they are well pleased ; but if they receive not a part thereof, behold they are angry.” *

After this he warned them of their spirit of discontent, in these words :

“ But if they had been pleased with that which God and His apostle had given them, and had said, God is our support ; God will give unto us of His abundance and His prophet also ; verily unto God do we make our supplications.” †

* Koran, chap. ix., v. 58.

† Ibid, v. 59.

And for the virtue of contentment, God hath praised the elect amongst his creatures, saying :

* “ God is well pleased with them, and they are well pleased with Him.”¹

§ II.—TRADITION CONCERNING MOSES.

O Reader, thou mayest understand the pleasure that God taketh in them, and they in God, by that which is related concerning Moses, upon whom be the peace of God, how he exclaimed: “ Oh my God, show me some work by which I may find favour in thine eyes; ” and God, whose name be exalted and magnified, answered him, “ Thou can’st not do it.” Then Moses bowed himself down with his forehead to the earth, and humbled his soul before God; and God answered him again: “ O son of Amram, I shall be well pleased with thee, mayest thou be well pleased with my decree.”

§ III.—SAYINGS OF THE PROPHET TOUCHING CONTENTMENT.

The Prophet, upon whom be peace, and the blessing of God, once said: “ Oh, my God, I ask

* Koran, chap. v., v. 119,—ix., v. 101, and other places.

of thee the virtue of contentment after thy decree," and it is maintained that he used this expression, "after thy decree," because before God's decree, contentment would imply nothing more than the intention of being contented, and a disposition to accept of God's degree willingly, whenever it should be made manifest; but real contentment can only be manifested after the event.

It has been moreover handed down to us, that the Prophet, having one day met with one of his companions, who was lamenting over his maladies and his poverty; reproved him, saying: "What now! whence is this impatience that I behold in thee?" "It arises from suffering and need, O apostle of God!" replied the other, and the Prophet resumed: "Knowest thou not that I can teach thee a lesson, by the repetition of which God will deliver thee from these tribulations." "By him who hath sent thee to reveal to us the truth," resumed his companion, "the only thing which rejoices me in the midst of my sufferings is to have fought together with thee at Bedr and at Hodaibia." "How," continued the Prophet, "dost thou think that the same portion is allotted to the

warriors of Bedr and Hodaibia as to the contented and resigned.”²

§ IV.—PHILOSOPHICAL SENTENCES IN PROSE AND RHYME,
CONCERNING CONTENTMENT.

We read that the prince of the faithful, Omar Ibn Khattab, may God be well pleased with him,³ once wrote to Abu Mûsa el Ashari, after the customary formulas:

“Without doubt all blessings are comprehended in contentment. Be thou content, if thou canst; and if not, endure with patience.”

Abû Derdâ has said:⁴ The climax of happiness is to suffer the powers of this world with patience, and to be content with the decrees of fate.

Sa’d Ibn Abi Wakkas,⁵ having come to Mecca after the loss of his eyesight, and the people crowding round him to entreat that he would pray to God for them, Abd-allah Ibn Saïb said to him, “Oh, my uncle, thou prayest always for others, and God heareth thee; wherefore, then, dost thou not implore him to restore thy sight?” Sa’d smiled, and replied, “Oh, son of my brother,

God's decree is far dearer to me than the light of my eyes."

And be it known to thee, O reader, and may God be merciful unto thee, that contentment consists in ceasing to demand from other created beings that which is for our own advantage.

Since Destiny is inevitable, he who sets himself against it is a fool; he who is content with it, shall be crowned with success; and he who lays aside all importunity, shall be prosperous and happy.

Better is it to govern contentment than to be governed by it.⁶ Incline thyself to contentment before thou art compelled to it by necessity.

Hassan el Basri,⁷ being one day interrogated as to whence unhappiness proceeded, replied: "from absence of contentment in God." "And on being asked further, "whence does this proceed?" he replied, "from want of knowledge of God." I have composed, amongst other things, the following verses upon contentment:

"Oh, thou who art my refuge in the mis-

fortunes which befall me, and hast compassion of me under my bitter losses.

“ I feel within my heart that which causeth me gladly to welcome whatsoever thou mayest decree.

“ I appeal concerning the portion allotted me to a judge who speaks plainly, and reveals himself to all.”

And upon same subject I again wrote these verses:—

“ Oh, thou who beholdest my state, and knowest that of necessity I cannot do otherwise than be content with it ;

“ Thou from whom there is neither refuge nor defence ;

“ Let not thy power and greatness suffer that he whom thou protectest should perish !

“ But if it be thy pleasure that he should perish, behold me ready for whatever thou mayest appoint and choose.

“ Every chastisement which cometh from thee shall be sweet unto me, excepting separation from thee, and the flames of hell.”

And again I have written in verse :

“ When I am wounded by God's decree, I

never repulse it with any semblance of anger or bitterness.

“Such patience undoubtedly proceeds from the right knowledge I have of him; even as my contentment springs from the reverence I feel for his decrees.”⁸

§ V.—FAIR GARDEN AND EXCELLENT ARENA. EDUCATION OF
BAHRAM GOUR, KING OF PERSIA.

It is related of Yezdejird, surnamed el Athim, son of Sapor Du 'lAktaf,⁹ that when his son Bahram Gour was born into the world, he was informed by the astrologers concerning the powerful influence which presided over the birth of the infant, and concerning the prosperity of his future fate: that the empire would indeed devolve upon him, but only after painful vicissitudes, trials, and long wanderings; and that he would be educated in the midst of a foreign nation, a people high-minded and generous, but of a wrathful spirit, by whose assistance he would attain to supreme power.*¹⁰ This is what is

* The remainder of the paragraph is to be found only in S. A. 536, fol. 74.

related by historians and biographers, but for my part I gather from it that Yezdejird obtained all this information from soothsayers, who learn from the devils¹¹ the tidings, which the latter purloin by eaves-dropping at the gates of Heaven. And in truth the sayings of astronomers, in those things that do not concern the motions of the stars and their ascendants, conjunctions, eclipses, are all fables; seeing that astronomy is founded upon the observation of revolutions, which recur according to a fixed and established order. Likewise, when Nimrod and Pharaoh were warned by the two infants who had been informed of the impending death of these two princes, it came to pass in the way I have here stated; seeing that these infants could not have obtained the knowledge by means of astrology, but rather by that of divination.¹²

The narrative continues thus: Yezdejird, turning over in his mind the virtues and qualities of all nations, perceived that the Arabs were possessed of those designated by the astronomers in greater perfection than any others; wherefore fixing his choice upon them, he wrote to No'man

the Greater, son of Imrulkais Ibn Adi Ibn Nasr, the Lakhmite,¹³ who, resolving to go in person to the court of Yezdejird, took with him a numerous band of Arab chiefs and lords, whom Yezdejird presented with splendid gifts, and treated with great courtesy. Having afterwards given them to understand that he proposed making No'man king over them,¹⁴ they readily consented; and Yezdejird invested No'man with the royal robes, placed a crown upon his head, proclaimed him King of the Arabs,¹⁵ and entrusted his son to him to be educated. No'man began by appointing four wet-nurses for the royal infant, two of them Arab women, and the other two Persian, all of them in florid health, of lively intelligence, lofty lineage, and even temperament, to whom he prescribed a wholesome manner of life.¹⁶ Then returning with Bahram into his own country, he caused the castle of Khawarnak to be erected for him in a situation recommended by the physicians* for the purity of the air and excellence of the water.

Bahram, having been brought up at the breast for four years, the nurses weaned him. He was

* This last sentence is to be found only in S. A. 535.

a robust infant, and so precocious, that he appeared almost to have attained to adolescence, and spoke Arabic and Persian to admiration.* When he had attained the age of five years he told No'man that he desired to be instructed in those studies which were suitable for princes ; on which occasion the dialogue took place between him and the king which I have recorded in the book entitled *Pearls for the Forehead*, which contains the abstract of the Notices of Remarkable Children.† No'man thereupon wrote to Yezdejird to send to his son some of the philosophers, jurists, and expounders of the sacred writings of Persia ; and Yezdejird sent him the requisite instructors, to whom No'man added one of the wisest and most learned of the Arabs, who had penetrated deeply into politics and literature, and was well versed in the histories and biographies of the kings and in the warlike chronicles of the Arabs and of other nations, whose name was Hils. Each of these instructed Bahram in his own peculiar

Idem. S. A. 536, gives fewer details of the education of Bahram.

† Concerning this work of our author, see his preface and my Introduction, § vii.

branch of learning ; until at twelve years old he knew more than all of them put together, and they therefore perceived that he needed no further instruction, and that his education might be considered complete. No'man thereupon dismissed them with great honour, retaining only Hils, from whom the youth would not be separated, for he held him in great estimation on account of the dignity and refinement of his manners, his literary, political, and historical information, and the clearness of his understanding ; merits which he had never seen united in the same degree in any other person. At the same time No'man sent to ask Yezdejird for masters to instruct his son in the use of arms, horsemanship, and other warlike exercises ; and these being sent, Bahram remained three more years with the King of Hira, during which time he perfected himself in all these accomplishments. No'man then honourably dismissed these masters also, still, however, retaining Hils on account of the great affection borne him by the youth.

Bahram having now attained the age of fifteen years, No'man requested and obtained the permis-

sion of Yezdejird to bring his son back to him in person, and caused a great number of Arab lords and chiefs to accompany him on his journey.¹⁷ The King of Persia was much pleased at their coming, lodged them sumptuously, heaped presents upon No'man, and having overwhelmed him with honours and distinctions, sent him away, retaining his son with him. While Bahram, in his turn, would not suffer the departure of Hils, to whom he was so closely bound by the ties of friendship.

Yezdejird, was a stern and hard-hearted man, violent, proud, inaccessible, swift to shed blood and to seize the property of his subjects, on which account he received the surname of El Athim, or the Bad. He treated his son with that harshness which was natural to him, and made him suffer innumerable vexations and hardships; amongst others, creating him Superintendant of the drink,¹⁸ which annoyed the young man beyond measure. Unable to put up with it his patience gave way, and he went to complain to Hils. The sage had compassion on him, and addressed him in these or similar words:—

“ May God dispel your sorrow, exalt your glory,

make your name a pleasant sound in the hearts and in the mouths of your people, and bow down beneath your sceptre the foreheads of the kings of the Arabs and barbarians. Be it known to you that he is the most capable of giving upright counsels, who is recognised as such, and is specially called and instructed to do so.

“It was said: Good counsels are nauseous at the beginning and sweet in the end; even as medicines which disgust you when you take them, but when you have experienced their good effects, you rejoice; when you put your lips to them you curse them, and then laud them to the skies when they have accomplished their work.

“The faithful minister or courtier stands at his post beside the king, with untiring zeal to serve him, and earnest endeavours to give him good counsel; while he, whose fidelity is doubtful, seeks to win his favour by horrid flattery and exaggerated submissiveness.

“Sincere counsellors do not find favour with the king, unless he be endowed with magnanimity; otherwise they will fail, and the flatterers will succeed. This comes to pass because the truthful

counsellor gives to others that which appears good in his own eyes, and can only be understood by another lofty spirit.

“You will merit severe blame if you withhold a truthful counsel from him who gives you his confidence, and if you conceal the best measure to be adopted from him who reveals to you his secret without reserve.

“Amongst faithful, and far-seeing counsellors, he is most deserving of welcome and attention whose prosperity depends upon your own, and whose safety is impossible unless in combination with yours. He who stands in such a position with regard to you, in exerting himself for your interests, will likewise forward his own, and will defend his own person while fighting for you.” *

Hils continued to this effect : “I am grieved that the son of the King should meet with such annoyance and vexation in submitting to his father’s authority ; and, for my part, I should advise him to put a good face upon the matter, instead of exhibiting so much weariness and disgust. And, indeed, the King having entrusted an office

* This and the preceding maxim are rendered in part from S.A. 536.

to him it is as incumbent upon him as upon every other official to show himself pleased and gratified by it; for those who bear company to kings in a manner not pleasing to them, only succeed in inflaming them with anger against themselves. Nor do I mean to say, therefore, that we should assume an outward semblance contrary to that which we bear in our hearts; because, when we assume a nature foreign to us, the dye comes out, as is the case with hair tinged with a colour not its own. But, in the present case, let the son of the King consider with an impartial eye the command that appears to him so grievous, and I am sure that he will acknowledge it to be good.

“The King has, in truth, placed him over his drink, which is the same as to say over his whole amusement, the only one in which his soul expands to joy, and seeks recreation after the cares and fatigues of government. Moreover, he has entrusted to his son the custody of his own life, and chosen him to watch over it in his most private haunts; and, during these amusements, he has committed to him unreservedly the safety of his person, whether to protect him from the malice of

his enemies in seeking to poison the drink, or from the perturbations of his mind, which might be caused by drunkenness and excitement. How, then, can so high and important a charge be considered unbecoming a generous and affectionate son? How could he behold it with pleasure if his father should commit such a trust to any other? Let the King's son reflect upon that which I have called to his mind; and being by this means persuaded that the office is not only honourable and befitting his degree, but even an enviable one, let him submit contentedly to the arrangement which has conferred it upon him, and bestow his care and attention upon the discharge of it. By this means he need not assume a semblance which he abominates, nor devote himself to that from which he ardently longs to be released; which would be an unsuccessful measure after all, for the eyes of others would read in his countenance, and their thoughts would divine in his soul that which he was making every effort to conceal.¹⁹

“It was said, dissimulation is a mirage, which deceives short-sighted intellects, but conceals nothing from those who have most penetration.

“The power of dissimulation extends only over sight and hearing, the two senses which are satisfied with outward impressions but do not go beyond them. Its empire does not reach the intellect to which He, who is the Beginning and End of all things reveals, by his peculiar gift, many things” which cannot be perceived by the senses.

“So it was with the bear,” continued Hils, “who, with all his stupidity, discovered that the monkey was acting a part.” “Tell me how that came to pass,” said Bahram, and the Sage thus resumed his discourse.

§ VI.—THE BEAR AND THE LITTLE MONKEY.

It is related that a certain bear, frequenting a marshy spot thickly covered with fruit trees, inhabited by a numerous tribe of monkeys, and perceiving with what agility they ascended the trees, sprang from bough to bough, and chose the most delicious fruits, desired in his heart to catch a monkey, and compel it to gather fruit for him. To this end he went to a place where was a great troupe of monkeys, and began climbing up a tree, making them believe that he wished to ascend

still higher. Then, all of a sudden, he paused and let go, to show the monkeys that, being no longer able to hold on, he was sliding down the tree. Falling to the ground, he continued twitching his legs for a time, and at last ceased to move, opened his mouth, and feigned himself dead.²¹

The monkeys, thereupon, crowded round him to look at him, but one shrewder than the rest said : “ It is not at all unlikely that the bear may be practising some evil stratagem. Prudence, therefore, directs that we should not approach too near him, and should remain upon our guard. But if we *must* go near him, let us go and collect some wood, pile it up round him, and set fire to it. Then, if he is only feigning death, he will be taken in, and if he is really dead, there is no harm in burning him.

“ It was said: Your enemy is your opposite. Now it is the nature of opposites to fly from each other, to turn their backs upon each other, and mutually to do their utmost to increase the distance which separates them.

“ Tread not the same soil with your enemy,

unless you be on your guard and on the watch, neither be you deceived by the knowledge that he has quitted it, and is now far off; for, before his departure, he may have spread a net, and made ready his snares.

“Go not against your enemy by night, unless well armed, and with caution and vigilance; and if he submits, and flings away his weapons, be not deceived by this, for not all weapons are openly worn.* In like manner,” continued the monkey, “did the Hermit detect the Scoundrel, and concluded to his hurt the trick which the latter had commenced against himself.” “Tell us the story,” said the rest of the troop, and the wise monkey continued thus:—

§ VII.—THE HERMIT AND THE THIEF.²²

†It is related that a certain hypocritical Monk retired to a hermitage at a distance from the city, where those of his own religion were used to visit him frequently from devotion, and from anxiety to obtain the benefit of his prayers. The Monk then gave out that he was frequently visited

* I translate alternately from S.A. 535 and S.A. 536. † S.A. 536.

by numbers of the poor, whose miserable condition wrung his heart; but that he had not the wherewithal to give them relief. Thereupon the devotees began to bring him large sums of money, supposing that, as he himself gave it to be understood, he knew better than any who were the proper objects of charity. The Monk appropriated this money to his own use, and was accustomed to go immediately to bury it, with the exception of a few farthings which he dealt out to the indigent, in order the more effectually to impose upon the faithful givers of alms.

It was said, the cheat is equal to the robber in villany, and superior to him in cowardice and shamelessness.

The rogue will suck the blood of others under the semblance of charity, until even the most simple-minded will agree with the mistrustful as to his villainy. But when this has come to pass all compassion will be withdrawn from him, leaving only hatred in its place.*

Now, a Thief, perceiving the abundance of the alms collected by this Hermit, and nothing doubting

* I resume the reading of S. A. 535.

that he should find a treasure in his possession, determined to rob him by scaling the wall of his hermitage.²³ One night, therefore, he set to work, and having got over the wall, he found the Hermit still up and saying his prayers in the chapel by the light of a lamp, whereupon he cried out to him: "Surrender yourself, old man, if you would not have me strike off your head from your shoulders." Turning round at these words, and beholding before him a young and strong man brandishing a naked scimitar, the Hermit perceived that resistance would be vain; wherefore, interrupting himself in his prayers, he fled from the Thief towards one side of the chapel, where was a niche in the wall,²⁴ into which he thrust his head, putting his arms behind his back in the posture which a man is compelled to assume in order that he may bound. The Thief, thinking that he meant thus to yield himself up as vanquished, and was hiding his head from fright, sheathed his scimitar and was advancing to seize him, when, on a sudden, the floor gave way beneath his feet, and he fell into a pit-fall with a violence which deprived him of all his strength.

*The Hermit hastened to look at him, and beholding him defeated and a prisoner: "Ah," said he, "so you are caught, you covetous villain!" "Yes, you impostor," replied the thief! "Then lie there and die," continued the monk. "Do you think, that after having gulled the owners of this money so that they suffered me to appropriate it, I do not know how to defend and secure it?" "But I do not think," replied the thief, that you can defend it by dint of prostrations!"²⁵ "Fool!" retorted the monk, "do you not perceive that the nets in which I enclosed it, and the snares in which I entrapped and caught it, were no other than a few prostrations with my face to the ground, a few tears, a few sighs, a few contortions, and a few hours of the night spent in prayer, and in patching my friar's gown?"

So, there the Thief remained all night, for he could find no means of escape from the trap into which he had fallen. When daylight came, the Hermit went and denounced him to the authorities, and he was taken and led to execution. The Hermit had dug a deep pit in a line with a niche,

* Version of S. A. 536.

had fitted a trap into it which gave way beneath the weight of any one who pressed upon it, and had then covered it with one of the reed mats of the chapel. He himself, in flying from the Thief towards the niche, had taken good care not to step upon it, but to pass by on one side of it; while the other miscreant, who knew nothing about it, and used no prudence, trusted entirely to the apparent surrender of the Monk, without perceiving that he had prepared an invisible weapon of defence against him.

§ VIII.—CONTINUATION OF THE FABLE OF THE BEAR AND
THE MONKEY.

The monkeys having heard their sage companion's parable, took good care not to approach too near the bear, but dispersed themselves to collect wood in order to burn him. A foolish Monkey, however, who had not been present, nor heard this counsel, approaching the bear, sought to lay its ear upon his mouth, in order to know if he breathed. The Bear, therefore, caught him, and having torn up a fibre from the roots of the Khaizuran,²⁶ knotted one end of

it round the body of the monkey, while he held the other ; and compelled him to climb the trees, gather the choicest fruits, and throw them down to him. This amusement lasted all the rest of the day ; and in the evening the Bear led the monkey to a grotto, into which he drove him, closing the mouth of it with a block of stone. Returning the next day, he dragged forth the poor little animal, carried it to the marsh, compelled it to spend the whole day in gathering fruit for him, and at night again imprisoned it in the grotto. This continued for a long time, the Bear having attained the summit of his wishes, and the Monkey being in the most deplorable condition and deepest affliction that could be conceived, passing the whole of the day in serving the Bear, and the whole of the night in prison.

It was said : He who thrusts himself forward to do that which is not his business will come to grief.

The passions of the man of understanding are subordinate to his judgment. If some desire awakes in his mind, he submits it to judgment, which examines whence it arises and whither it

tends, and regulates it according to the dictates of reason. But the judgment of the fool is subordinate to his passions. If he conceives a wish he pursues it with all his might, and there is nothing in the world that can restrain him.

The merest trifle of food which you are compelled to bear on your shoulders to your enemy, is a crushing weight. For it weighs upon the mind as much as upon the body, and hence the annoyance of it is general. It is the reverse when the provisions are to be carried to a friend, because then the mind rejoices in the task, and the body obeys the mind.

Meanwhile, the Monkey, reflecting upon his position, perceived that the good faith with which he served the bear, prevented his freeing himself from his clutches ; so, repenting of his uprightness, and convinced that cunning alone could open for him a way of escape, he devised a clever trick to play his master.

It was said, when all the passions of a slave are dead, his understanding obtuse, his thoughts low and grovelling, then will he be true to his lord ; but if the slave be free from these bad qualities, his

owner will find that he must share the power over him with other masters more powerful than himself. The first of these are the passions, for if the slave have any, he will suffer himself to be guided by them. Secondly, if his intellect be sound, he will exert it to find some alleviation to his sufferings, or to devise a method of escaping from his captivity, or of defending his person. Thirdly, the thoughts of the slave have only to raise their heads, and they will awake in him indignation, rancour and hatred, and these impulses of his mind will lead him whither they will, not whither his master pleases.

Now amongst the artifices which the Monkey plotted against the Bear, was that of feigning his sight to be much impaired. For this purpose he began to throw him down such fruits as were good for nothing; upon which the Bear reproached him vehemently, but without producing any effect; and then beat him, but the Monkey did not desist on that account. After this conduct had continued for some time, the Bear one day said: "I am tired of reproving and beating you, and I have a great mind to eat you up, since you are no longer of any use to me."

It was said : When you find none but ill-disposed beings amongst your servants, you had better serve yourself without further requiring their assistance ; for the vexation that they will cause you is equal to the fatigue you would have to endure in waiting upon yourself with your own hands.

The Monkey replied to the menaces of the Bear : “ I am not so ill-disposed as you think ; and if you were to kill me you would have cause to repent, as the Miller did when he killed his Ass.” “ Tell me that story,” said the Bear, and the Monkey resumed :

§ IX.—THE MILLER AND THE ASS.²⁷

It is related that once a Miller had a little Ass which turned his mill, and also a bad Wife, whom he dearly loved, but who had conceived a passion for one of his neighbours who on his side hated and avoided her. It once appeared to this Miller that he beheld in a dream a man who said to him : “ Go and dig in such a place, in the circle round the mill wheel, and thou shalt find a treasure.” He hastened immediately to tell this to his Wife, bidding her not to repeat it to any living creature.

It was said: Hold him for a fool who finds it a

great relief to go about trumpeting forth his secret. For the labour of having to act for yourself when there is none else to take part in the business, is a much less evil than to divulge a secret by imparting it to others.

Two things suffice to deprive a free man of his liberty, and these are, rendering homage to virtue, and divulging a secret. And the interpretation of this saying is, that if you hold another to be a just man, you will submit yourself implicitly to him; for a man becomes the servant of him whom he holds in great estimation.* Likewise, if you communicate your secret to another, the fear lest he should betray it will make you humble and reverent towards him.

That which women are good for is to sweep the house, to cook the food, to nurse the children, to ply the distaff, and to excite and soothe the passions. He who calls them to take part in his affairs, or imparts to them a secret, cannot do otherwise than descend to their level, since the capacity of women does not enable them to rise to ours.

No sooner, therefore, had the Miller related his dream to his Wife, than she hastened to com-

* *Tien caro altrui chi tien se cosi vile.*—PETRARCH.

municate it to the neighbour whom she loved, hoping by this means to gain his affection. The neighbour promised to go with her at night to the spot pointed out, where they would set to work together to dig. They did so, and found the money, and drew it forth. Then the neighbour said to the woman, "What will you do with this money?" and she replied, "We will divide it equally between us, and will each of us go home with our own share. You shall put away your wife, I will find means to procure a separation from my husband, then you shall marry me, and when we are man and wife the whole of the money will be united in our hands." "No," replied the neighbour, "I should be afraid lest riches should render you arrogant, and you should take a fancy to some other lover."

Accordingly it was said: Gold shines in a house like the sun in the world,* and none can do without it, but ascetics, who hate this world, and are grieved at the necessity of dwelling in it. But the true ascetic is he who leads an austere life in the

* The remainder of the paragraph is found in S. A. 536 alone, which prefaces it with: "The author of the book says: it was said."

days of his ardent youth ; whereas, that virtue must be esteemed false which feigns to restrain the desires of a worn-out and decrepit soul, and only betakes itself to abstinence in the gloomiest period of life.

He who attains to luxury beyond his station, no longer recognises his former friends.

Wealth is the ruin of women, for in them passion predominates over reason.

Never give your children, your wife, or your servants, more than they require, for they will obey you so long as they have need of you.

“ It would be better,” continued the neighbour, “ that all the money should remain in my hands, as I might thus employ it more effectually in freeing you from your husband, and uniting you to myself.” “ But,” rejoined the woman, “ I feel the very same mistrust of you that you do of me ; and have not the slightest intention of entrusting to you my part of the treasure. Why should you grudge it to me ? Was it not I who pointed out its existence to you, rather than to any other person !

“ It was said : It is only in consequence of the

corruption of the times that justice and equity are supposed to merit gratitude ; for it is, in fact, only he who does more than he is obliged to do who is deserving of gratitude. He who gives those around him what he owes them, merits commendation, but not thanks."

On hearing these words, the neighbour, urged by the malice of his own soul, by indignation, and by fear lest the woman should accuse him to her relations, slew her, and flung her corpse into the place whence they had dug the treasure, and as day was beginning to dawn, he did not stay to cover up the body, but in all haste loaded the treasure on his shoulders, and went his way. Scarcely was he gone, when the Miller came to fasten the Ass to the handle of the millstone within the circle, and gave a shout to urge him forward, upon which the animal advanced a few steps and then finding the pit and the corpse before him, stood still. The Miller thereupon beat him vigorously, and the Ass began to writhe and twist about, without on that account moving forward a single step, upon which his master, who could not see the obstacle which prevented

the advance of the poor beast, took a knife and began to prick him, which, having done for some time in vain, and becoming more enraged than ever, he dealt him so violent blow in the side, that the whole of the knife entered in, and the Ass fell down dead. While this was going forward, the morning had grown lighter, so that at length the Miller perceived the hole and found in it the dead body of his Wife, which he drew forth, discovering underneath it the vestiges of the treasure; and, furious at the loss at once of his money, of his wife, and of his ass; he slew himself with his own hand.

§ X.—CONTINUATION OF THE FABLE OF THE BEAR AND
THE MONKEY.

When the Monkey had ceased speaking, “I see clearly from your parable,” said the Bear, “that the Ass had a sufficient excuse for his conceit, but what excuse can you have?” To which the monkey replied: “This—that my sight is failing me, and that I am even fearful of losing it altogether. Now, if you choose to have me cured, that is your affair.” “And who have I,”

returned the bear, "who should be able to restore your eyesight, upon which depends your selection of fruit, and consequently, my welfare?" "There is no lack of physicians," answered the Monkey, "but those who are wise consult only those of their own species. Now, the monkeys of this country have amongst them a physician very celebrated, both for his disinterestedness and for his skill in his profession, and I have no doubt that, if I went to see him, my eyes would be healed, and that even the very sight of him would do me good."

The Bear having agreed to this, the Monkey caused himself to be taken to another monkey celebrated for its cunning and craft, which, on beholding the Bear, made its escape up a tree; but the Bear, stationing himself at its foot, began to describe the illness of his servant, entreating it to cure him. To all this the cunning monkey replied, "Let him come up here, that I may examine him with my own eyes." Whereupon the Bear, lengthening the fibre which bound the Monkey, sent him up, and the other monkey began to examine his eyes, and to ask him a

number of questions, so that he was able to describe the life he led with the Bear, and to implore his friend to teach him some stratagem by which he might obtain his deliverance. Upon this the shrewd Monkey replied, "You may reckon upon my persuading him to remain up all night, and then you must try to choose your opportunity when he is asleep to effect your escape; but take care that he does not feign sleep, and watch you." Then dismissing him, and turning to the Bear, he continued: "Before I prescribe anything, I must inform you what is the matter with your slave, for it is absurd to suppose that he who is ignorant of the malady, can point out a cure. Be it therefore known to you, that the reason why monkeys enjoy such good health, and are so sharp-sighted, slim, and lively, is, because it is their nature to be very wakeful, and to make many of their excursions by night."

Accordingly it was said too much sleep brings with it destruction, and ravishes away life.

He who addicts himself to slumber never attains his object.

The definition commonly given of liberality is not correct; namely, that it consists in readiness to give away things of great value;* for, in that case, the sluggard would be the most liberal of all men, since he gives away his own life without equivalent or hope of compensation.

“Doubtless,” continued the cunning monkey, “by withdrawing your servant from the mode of life to which he was accustomed, you have introduced the principle of dissolution into his frame, as was the case with the little bird which was caught for the king’s daughter.” “Tell me about that,” said the Bear, and the Monkey continued thus:—

§ XI.—THE LITTLE BIRD AND THE KING’S DAUGHTER.

It is related that a King of the Hellenes²⁸ had a Daughter, who was the apple of his eye; but her black bile being stirred up, she was attacked by all manner of complaints, and became so reduced, that she could take neither food nor physic. The physician who attended her therefore prescribed that she should be removed to a country-house, looking down upon a delightful garden watered

* This is here a play upon words impossible to translate.

by several streams. This was accordingly done, and the very day that she went there she saw a Bird of variegated plumage, which, perching upon a trellis of vines, began to peck the grapes, and then to warble the sweetest of songs, compounded of many tender melodies. On seeing and hearing this, the maiden was so cheered, that she immediately asked for something to eat.

It was said, the melody which goes straight to the heart is that which proceeds from the lips of beauty; since it moves at once the senses and the feelings, and these two forces developing themselves, in emulation of each other, act like compound medicines, which are at once more salutary and more efficacious than simple ones.

The little Bird then flew away, nor did he return during the whole of that day; and his absence caused the Maiden much anxiety; but the Bird having reappeared at the same hour the next day, she was greatly relieved and delighted, and proceeded to eat and drink, until it went away, "as it had done the day before, when she relapsed into the same state of uneasiness. The King being informed of this, gave orders that an

attempt should be made to catch the Bird, and the servants having succeeded in doing so, it was put into a cage, in which the damsel constantly watched it. She took great delight in it, and now eat her food and swallowed her physic with great readiness. And the physician, who knew nothing about the bird, seeing her thus regaining strength, attended her with redoubled diligence, as he now hoped to effect a cure.

The little Bird, meanwhile, passed several days without either singing or eating, and all the beauty of its feathers began to fade. The Maiden, therefore, fell back into her former state, or even a worse one, as she was harassed by a new cause of anxiety; and her father being informed of it, began to regret that he had ordered the capture of the Bird.

It was said: go not to school to one who is used to answer every question at once before having well considered it under every aspect, reflected upon the corollaries to be deduced either from the questionsthemselfes or from his own answers, and prepared himself to refute the objections which his adversary might raise, and to obviate

the possibility of the latter detecting him in contradiction with his own principles, and this for the same reason that you would not seek counsel from an inexperienced youth, who would not be able to trace from the beginning to the end the consequences of the measures he should propose to you. Choose rather to be a disciple of him who ponders the conclusion of the dispute before answering the opening propositions; in the same way, that if you desired a counsel, you would ask it from a man of experience, who would be able to scrutinise the matter from the bark even to the core, and would have eyes to see both where it began and whither it would tend.

The physician perceiving the disimprovement in the health of the Princess, imagined that it must be the result of some casualty; and having enquired into the matter, the story of the Bird was related to him. He immediately suggested that the whole garden should be enclosed in a great net, and this having been done, he set the Bird at liberty within it, which, returning to its customary dwelling and habits, became again as lively and beautiful as ever, and resumed its

delightful songs. While the Princess also improved in health, until she at length entirely recovered from her illness.

§ XII.—CONTINUATION OF THE FABLE OF THE BEAR AND
THE MONKEY.

When the Monkey had ended his parable, the Bear said to him: “I have heard your words, and understood your meaning. If you will now prescribe any thing which will restore my slave to health, I will do whatever you direct.” “I prescribe,” replied the cunning ape, “that you should remain a considerable part of the night in the place where you go to feed in the day-time. There is no doubt that this will prolong your life, give you more appetite and enjoyment, enliven your spirits, increase the luxury of your sleep, and at the same time restore the health of your slave.”

Having thanked him for this advice, the Bear went to his pasture-ground, where all day long the Monkey supplied him with bad fruit. But at night it exhibited more liveliness and alacrity, and began to throw down an occasional good fruit, as it had done aforetime. The early part of the night

having passed thus, the Bear led him back to the grotto, and shut him in. The next morning they resumed their usual course of life ; and thus the Monkey spent several days, always pretending that his sight became better at night, and gradually improving in the choice of the fruits, especially when it was moonlight. The bear, however, had not the slightest confidence in the honesty of the Monkey, whom he on the contrary held to be a false and deceitful hypocrite ; and as he multiplied his stratagems, so did the Bear's suspicions gain strength. At length, one night when he wanted to go to his lair, the Monkey strove to detain him, exclaiming every now and then: "Here, here, are some capital ones !" The Bear upon this, in compliance with his fierce and rugged nature, and in order to verify his suspicions, consented to stay, as there was a bright moonlight which would the better enable him to keep watch over the Monkey whilst he pretended to be asleep. Having therefore feigned to be buried in the profoundest slumber, and beginning to snore, the Monkey no longer hesitated to attempt effecting his escape ; and the Bear drawing in the cord, gave

him such a tug, that he broke his back, and killed him.

§ XIII.—CONTINUATION OF THE HISTORY OF BAHRAM GOUR.

* The author of the book, may God forgive him, says: "That being concluded which I desired to relate upon this subject, it is time to revert to that which is known to me of the story of Bahram. I will carefully abstain from fiction, or fabrication, and will endeavour faithfully to preserve the sense of the original narrative. Excepting that when I come to the tale which it places in the mouth of the Jester of Yezdejird, I shall abridge it on account of some sentences in the fable related by the Jester, which overstep the limits of pleasantry. I have therefore removed all such expressions as might be censured for indecorum. This is the substance of the tale. Bahram having listened to the discourse of Hils, hailed it with pleasure, composed his mind in accordance with it, and addressed the sage in these, or similar words: *

"What a blessing it is for me to have you at my side, and how refreshing is it to my spirit to hear

* This paragraph is from S. A. 536.

the precepts that you have taught me, the examples that you have set before me, and the wise sayings that you have sounded in my ears. Faith, if you live till I come to the throne, I will have you the first to enter my chamber, and the last to leave it;²⁹ and will regulate my conduct according to your directions, and trust to God for the rest." Hils, prostrating himself. at these words, implored of Heaven that all the wishes of Bahram might be fulfilled.

One day in the spring,* Yezdejird having gone to one of his favourite haunts, of which the pavement had been strewn with flowers, until it appeared covered with carpets of velvet, and coronals of gems, the King was in a state of the highest enjoyment, when Bahram entered the hall. Taking his stand on the threshold, in fulfilment of the office committed to him, and thence turning his eyes on the countenances of the bystanders and all around the hall, he was entranced³⁰ at the sight of the flowers,* which reminded him of his stay at the court of No'man. He recalled to mind the banquets in the smiling gardens, where

* In this passage I adhere to 536.

they were wont to sit drinking amidst flowers bathed in dew ; the delight of going forth into the country at peep of dawn, to rouse the wild beasts from their lairs, and the pleasure of chasing, overtaking, and capturing them ; and his mind being absorbed in such thoughts, he remained silent, his eyes fixed on the ground, breathing deep, and with a troubled countenance. Yezdejird, meanwhile, was contemplating him stealthily, and the young man rousing himself, and lifting up his eyes, perceived that he had attracted the observation of his father, and repented him that he had done so. Nor was it long before Yezdejird, changing from his previous good-humour, bent down his head ; whereupon the guests and all the company rose to their feet ; for it was the custom of the court of Persia, that whenever the King appeared silent and displeased, all those present, without exception, should go towards the door, and there remain motionless in awe and silence.

There was present amongst the rest on this occasion, one of the king's jesters, a man of quick speech and ready wit, gifted with a lively imagination,³¹ and a talent for uttering shrewd sayings on

the spur of the moment. Guessing that the king's displeasure was caused by seeing his son thus sad and silent in the midst of a festive meeting, it occurred to him to endeavour to serve Bahram, and thus to conciliate his favour ; and he began to turn over in his mind some suitable device to shield the youth from the displeasure of the King. At that moment, Yezdejird, raising his head, looked at him, as if to call upon him for some jest, which might serve to divert him. The Jester prostrated himself ; then rising on his knees, and sitting down upon his heels : " Your abject slave," said he, " entreats the King's permission to relate a very curious adventure, which happened to himself." Yezdejird replied by a sign of assent, and the Jester began his story as follows :

§ XIV.—THE KING OF PERSIA'S JESTER.

The humble slave of the King was in his youth a great admirer of women. When he saw one who appeared to him beautiful, he would fall desperately in love with her, but soon wearied of her, for constancy formed no part of his nature.

It was said : If thou sufferest love to follow

immediately upon the glance of the eye, thou causest it to stumble and fall.

Keep a guard over thine eyes, for a pernicious attachment often takes its rise in the boldness of the eye. Concerning which, it is related³² of a certain devotee who was doing penance as being on pilgrimage, and had with him, as his fellow traveller, a beautiful young woman, that he veiled her eyes with his own Isâb, and the reason being inquired of him, replied to this effect: "Because it is the glances of her own eyes, and not those of others which awaken love." *

The inconstant man deserves that all his wishes should be frustrated.

Instability is the mark of a vulgar mind, and not of a lofty spirit.

To give up one true love for another, is as if a man should change his religion.

"Now it came to pass," continued the Jester, "that the King's slave journeying in the country of Scind, and traversing one of the cities of that province, fell in with a woman who surpassed all others that ever were seen, in the beauty of her face, her height, the perfect symmetry of her

* This anecdote is found in s. A. 536 only.

limbs, the ease of her carriage, the gracefulness of her movements, the fascination of her eye, and the charm of her whole appearance. The King's slave turned at once to follow her, being so amazed that he scarcely knew whither he went, and when she entered her house, he took up his post before the door, and remained there day and night. The woman sent to him, to request him to go away, bidding him take care lest her kinsfolk should do him some ill turn; but the King's slave only answered the messengers with lamentations concerning his passion: concluding by saying that no human being should compel him to leave that door, and that were it to cost him his life, he could not refrain from the contemplation of her beauty. For a long time, the woman took no heed of him, and then sent him another message, to which he replied to the same effect as before. At length she sent to him a third message, in these terms: "I suspect you to be of a fickle nature, and capable of playing me false; were it not for this, I would hasten to make you happy. Nevertheless, I will consent to marry you, on condition that you wed no other

wife.³³ But I warn you, that should you ever forsake me, not only should I put you to death without fail, but before slaying you I would afford the world such an example in your person that it should pass into a proverb. If, on these conditions, you still persist in your wish, then come; but if not, make haste to save yourself before the way of escape is closed against you."

It was said: There are four kinds of fools who merit no pity when some mishap befalls them; and they are,—he who accuses the physician of imposture, because he tells him the nature of his malady; he who loads himself with a burden beyond his strength; he who wastes his substance in pleasure; and he who enters upon an undertaking after he has been warned of its perils.

He who opens thine eyes, gives thee aid; he who warns thee rouses thee from sleep; he who makes a case plain to thee, is thy sincere friend, and one who honours thee; and he who enters a protest and warns thee of that which he will do, neither fails in his duty nor deceives thee.

The King's servant, continued the Jester,

accepted the bargain, giving his own person in pledge of its observance ; married the woman, and lived with her for some time in peace. It happened, however, that a young female friend of hers came to visit her, and the King's servant contemplating her by stealth, was captivated by her beauty, and his whole soul turned towards her ; he followed her to her own house, took up his post at the door, and began to weary her with messages until she complained to his wife, who thereupon began to deafen him with her complaints and reproaches, reminding him of the conditions stipulated between them ; and concluding with a positive injunction to him to desist. This, however, only served to render him more obstinate. And his wife perceiving his perverseness, made an incantation, by means of which she transformed him into a hideous negro, and employed him in the execution of the meanest and most laborious tasks.

This punishment, however, did not change his nature, nor did it produce any other effect than that of causing him to fall in love with another slave, a negress, to whom he paid his court with

a perseverance which, having exhausted her patience, she too complained to her mistress, the Enchantress.

It was said, nature is more powerful in man than education, for our dispositions are original, and are strengthened by all the faculties, which grow with our growth. Being supported by all these partisans, they become citizens of the soul which is their dwelling, and what marvel if they obtain there a power much beyond that of education, which is foreign and adventitious.

Of all masters he is the one least likely to obtain his object who expects that his pupil should assist him in subduing his own nature. For how can this be effected, since the natural dispositions are stronger, more cherished, and have far more hold upon the soul of the disciple than the master can boast of. He is the wisest instructor who requires that his pupil should dissemble and conceal the evil that is in his nature.

This fresh delinquency of the King's servant having come to the ears of his wife, she was filled with indignation, and having cast a fresh spell, she transformed him into an ass, and hired him out to

perform the hardest labour, and bear the heaviest burdens, in which condition he remained a long time. Nevertheless, this hard labour did not avail to quench his natural disposition, or prevent him from falling in love, as usual, with a she-ass, whom he never saw but he began to bray and run after her, with an eagerness which could only be restrained by blows; so that the King's servant had a very hard life of it. Now it happened one day that the Sorceress his wife went to pay a visit to the daughter of the King of that country, and was standing with her in an open gallery which commanded a view of all the roads of the neighbourhood on the very day that the King's servant had been hired by a decrepit old man, who had laden him with earthenware goods in two sacks, and was driving him to the palace of the Princess; when, behold! there close to the palace, stood the she-ass who was the object of his flame. So little control had he over himself, that he immediately set off to run towards her, braying after the fashion of an ass. The people on all sides assembled to beat him; the goods he was carrying fell to the ground; the old man to whom they

belonged shouted for help ; all the lads and children gathered round to assault him ; the she-ass ran away kicking with all her might, while the King's servant nevertheless continued his pursuit. The King's daughter, on beholding this absurd scene, could not contain her laughter, but the Enchantress said to her, " Oh, Daughter of the King, I could tell you that concerning this ass which should astonish you far more than what you have seen." " I should be very glad to hear it," replied the Princess, and the woman then proceeded to relate the whole story from the beginning, to the great surprise and amusement of the Princess, who at length entreated her to let me go free. The woman consented, and having destroyed the spell, the King's servant was restored to his former shape, and his first thought was to effect his escape from Scind.

§ XV.—END OF THE STORY OF BAHRAM GOUR.

Here the Jester held his peace, and Yezdejird, who had been convulsed with laughter both by the story and by the manner of its narration, recovered his gravity and dignity ; and presently

turning with an angry countenance to the Jester :
“ Wretch ! ” said he, “ what was it that moved you to fabricate this evil falsehood ? Do you not know that we have forbidden our subjects to lie, and that if they commit such a crime we punish them ? ”

It was said : “ Falsehood is like unto poisons, which cause deash if they are used alone, but when mixed in the compounds of the apothecary, may be of service. A king may not permit falsehood except in those who use it for the good of the state. As for example : to deceive the enemy, or to conciliate the disaffected. In like manner kings must not give license to keep the poisons of which we have spoken, unless to such safe persons as would know how to withhold them from men of evil dispositions.

“ O most fortunate Prince,” replied the Jester, “ this tale that I have related, contains precepts which may do good service to him who receives them rightly : but the motive which induced me to relate it is such, that it may be revealed to none, saving to the King himself.” Yezdejird, thereupon, having made a sign to those present, they all arose and left the hall ; and the king turning to

the Jester, said, "Well, what is it?" "The King's servant," replied the Jester, "desires to intimate to him that his illustrious son, Bahram, is desperately in love." "And with whom?" inquired Yezdejird; and the Jester answered, "With the daughter of the Sipehbud."³⁵ "Considering that which we have this evening observed in Bahram," replied the King, "it appears to us that you have divined the truth; nor can we blame the youth on that account, since he assuredly does not degrade himself by bestowing his love on the daughter of the guardian of our kingdom, and leader of our faithful subjects. Bahram shall, therefore, obtain the fulfilment of his wish, and you shall be rewarded for having apprised us of it. But say not a word concerning it to any one, until our purpose shall have been carried into execution."

Then, the King having given permission, Bahram, the guests, the courtiers, and the musicians returned to their seats in the hall,³⁶ and resumed their occupations, and Yezdejird again gave himself up to pleasure and to the enjoyment of the music, until the company dispersed, and all took leave of the King. The Jester having gone forth with the

others, followed after Bahram, and having apprised him of the facts concerning himself, Bahram thanked and rewarded him.

Yezdejird soon after gave his son the daughter of the Sipehbud to wife, nor did the youth cease to constrain his soul to be content with his father's service, until the soul accommodated itself to that which the understanding required of it. And thus Bahram remained at court, until a brother of the Kaisar, * having come to treat of peace, truce and other matters³⁷ with Yezdejird; the King of Persia glorying in this embassy, received the Roman with sumptuous hospitality, and showed him great honour according to his rank. Bahram then perceiving the high estimation in which this brother of the Kaisar was held at court, entreated him to intercede with his father to send him back to No'man. At his recommendation, Yezdejird granted the desired permission; and Bahram returning to Arabia, dwelt there with great satisfaction until the death of his father occurred, leaving him heir to the kingdom of Persia.

* See Note 15 to chap. ii.

§ XVI.—EXALTATION OF BAHRAM GOUR TO THE THRONE
OF PERSIA.

Here ends the chapter concerning Contentment. But, as the opportunity offers I will endeavour to render the pleasure of the reader more complete by relating the manner of the death of Yezdejird, what his subjects proceeded to do thereupon, and by what means the sovereignty devolved upon Bahram, in accordance with the statements of the authors best informed with regard to the history of Persia.

Yezdejird, deviating more and more widely from the right path, and becoming more tyrannical in his oppression and violation of those principles of justice and clemency, which his predecessors had observed, such of the inhabitants of Persia, as were the most distinguished for their station and their virtues, assembled to provide for their own interests. So it is asserted; but it is more probable that the conspirators were those who had suffered from the injustice of the King.* These, in accordance with the decision to which they came, proceeded to offer up prayers to God against

* Only S. A. 536 ventures upon this explanation.

Yezdejird, imploring him to deliver them from his tyranny; and the Lord moved to compassion by their unhappy condition, granted their request.^{3*}

It came to pass that one day when the King was in his hall, the chamberlain came to inform him that a loose and unbroken horse of unparalleled beauty, and possessing all the qualifications most esteemed in a charger, had come flying at full speed, and stopped short before the gate of the palace; that all the people were struck with terror, and none durst approach him, while even the very horses had fled away in affright. Believing all this to be a fable, Yezdejird rose to go and see this horse. He found him to be, indeed, an animal of marvellous beauty, which on his approach became perfectly quiet and gentle; and Yezdejird being more and more blinded by his extreme appreciation of himself, * began to stroke his forehead, and taking him by the forelock, desired that he might be saddled and bridled. Upon which, some say that, as Yezdejird kept going round him and patting his haunches, the animal gave him a kick which felled him to the ground and killed him, and there-

* S. A. 536.

upon took to flight with a speed so tremendous that no one could tell which direction he had taken; while, according to others, Yezdejird mounted him, urging him to his speed, and the horse, bearing him rapidly out of sight of all present, precipitated him into the sea; but which of these statements may be true, is known to God alone.

The Persians seeing themselves delivered from Yezdejird by the help of heaven, all agreed in determining to exclude his son from the throne; fearing lest he should follow in his father's footsteps. They, therefore, bestowed the crown upon a scion of the dynasty of their ancient kings, whose name was Chosroes, and who enjoyed universal popularity. He abrogated the unjust laws decreed by Yezdejird, and freed the Persians from so odious a system of government; so that they had reason to bless the choice which they had made.

Meanwhile, tidings of these events having reached No'man, he gave information of them to Bahram, promising him support and assistance, and proffering both his goods and person for his service. Bahram thanked him and requested him only to send his troops to make incursions into the

Persian territory, but with orders not to shed blood. No'man, therefore, sped his Arabs on these forays, in which they grievously wasted and spoiled the country. Thereupon came Persian ambassadors to the king of Hira, requiring of him to abstain from these acts of hostility and to return to the allegiance due from a faithful vassal.³⁹ No'man excused himself under pretext that he was nothing more than a servant of king Bahram, and had done only that which he commanded; advising them to address themselves to king Bahram himself.

The Persian orators having, therefore, presented themselves before him and examined him, were greatly struck with the beauty and majesty of his person;⁴⁰ so that prostrating themselves before him, they implored of him pardon and the oblivion of their offence. He spoke to them courteously, held out to them brilliant hopes; and concluded by bidding them return home, and assure the people of his good intentions towards them; seeing that he desired nothing but the public weal, and that he would immediately set forth to come to them in order to

make them acquainted with his person ; and to maintain his own rights. He bade them, therefore, prepare to receive him ; and having given this answer he dismissed the orators with much honour.

Meanwhile, ten squadrons,⁴¹ each of which consisted of a thousand valiant Arab horsemen, had been collected by No'man's orders for Bahram, who advanced at their head to attack the Persian territory. The king of Hira preceded him with a force more powerful than any which the Persians would be able to oppose to him ; and the Arabs having reached Jundi-Shahpûr, in those days the capital of Persia,⁴² encamped at the foot of the walls. Then the lords of the country, with the Mobedan-Mobed, went forth to meet Bahram ; a throne was immediately erected in the midst of the camp, and Bahram seated upon it, while the king of Hira stood before him ; and all the Persian chiefs, one after another, prostrated themselves before Bahram, and then went to take up their posts beside him.

When this ceremony was concluded, Bahram having given the Mobedan-Mobed license to speak, the latter praised God and thanked him for

the mercy he had shown towards his creatures, and then proceeded to recall the tyranny of Yezdejird, and how God had summoned him hence. He then touched upon the repugnance felt by the Persians to bestow the crown upon his son, fearing lest he should tread in the footsteps of his father, knowing moreover that he had grown up amongst the Bedouin Arabs, who were used to enrich themselves by battenning on the spoils of other countries, whence it might reasonably be supposed that he had acquired the same propensity. [He concluded by entreating Bahram to withdraw his claims, on condition that the Persians should agree to pay him tribute ; *] for this, he said, they were ready to do for the sake of peace ; but as to the kingdom, not only would they never consent to bestow it upon him, but they would leave no means untried of withholding it from him by force.

When the Mobedan-Mobed had ended his speech, Bahram addressed him in reply. After praising God, and thanking him for all his benefits, the youth acknowledged the truth of the

* I adhere to S. A. 536, which alone mentions the tribute.

charges of tyranny and iniquity, brought against Yezdejird by the Persian pontiff. He went on to declare, that he had always desired to obtain sovereign power, in order to efface all traces of this past tyranny, to raise a new edifice on the basis of justice, and to cause his subjects to enjoy the sweets of his mildness and beneficence, that so they might forget the harshness and cruelty of his father's rule. In conclusion, he said that although he had no intention of giving up his paternal inheritance, or of shunning any fatigue or peril in order to regain it; he would, nevertheless, propose to them a trial of courage. The crown and the other insignia of royalty, should be placed in the midst between two untamed lions;⁴³ he would himself come to the spot, together with Chosroes, the usurper of the throne; and whichever of the two should have the courage to take the crown from between the claws of the lions, should retain it as being the one most worthy of the sovereignty. Bahram added that, if he were willing to expose himself to this risk, it was only from tenderness towards his subjects whom he desired to save from the miseries of war; and also from

the firm confidence he reposed in the favour and assistance of God, conscious as he was of the uprightness of his purpose and purity of his intentions, seeing that he desired nothing else than the prosperity of the country, and of its inhabitants.

The Persian chiefs accepted the proposal of Bahram, hoping by this means to be rid of him without exposing themselves to the sufferings of war; but they, nevertheless, returned to the city full of admiration of the beauty, courtesy, eloquence, and regal dignity of the son of Yezdejird. Having found two fierce lions, they kept them fasting for three days, and on the fourth caused them to be conveyed out of the city in two iron cages. These lions had each an iron chain round his neck, which terminated in a stake, likewise of iron. The two stakes were fixed into the ground, leaving just so much space between them that the two lions might be able to touch each other; and the crown and insignia of royalty being placed where both could reach to defend them, the cages were opened, and the two lions came forth. An immense multitude of Persians had, meanwhile, assembled on the ground, and

the Arabs of the camp, hastening thither, likewise drew up on the opposite side.

Then Bahram came forth from his pavilion, having his loins girt with a belt "into which he had gathered up the skirts of his garments, and advancing in front of the ranks, he called aloud upon Chosroes: "Make haste and come forth," "O rebel! come, O usurper of the inheritance of my forefathers! come and take the royal crown which you have ravished from him to whom it appertained." "You are he," replied Chosroes, "who must first encounter the trial to which you have chosen to expose yourself; since you come as the challenger, and have offered yourself voluntarily; and, moreover, lay claim to the kingdom by right of succession, whereas I never laid claim to it at all, but it was offered to me, and I accepted it."*

Bahram replied not a word, but advanced unarmed as he was, and approached the lions, whereupon the Mobedan-Mobed seeing him thus resolved to encounter this peril, cried out to him, "You are going to meet your death, O Bahram—but the guilt will not be ours." "It is well,"

* I adhere to S.A. 536, which is plainer.

replied the youth; "I will take the whole of it upon myself; and, albeit I act thus only from tenderness for you, yet none shall deter or restrain me." "Since you are determined to have it so at all costs," resumed the Pontiff, "confess your sins to Almighty God,—entreat his forgiveness for them,—and implore his help." Bahram thereupon rehearsed his sins, expressed his penitence, and exclaimed: "Oh, Lord God, give me thine aid," and then drew near to one of the lions.

The savage animal sprang upon him, but the youth avoided him with great dexterity, and an agile bound placed him astride upon the back of the lion, to whom he gave so terrific a squeeze with his knees, that the brute extended his paws, hung out his tongue, and lay senseless and motionless on the ground. Meanwhile the other lion sprang forward to attack Bahram, but not being able to advance beyond the length of its chain, the youth shielded himself with the head of the lion which was under him, and then, seizing the other by the ears, began striking their skulls together, until both fell down dead. He then rose upon his feet, gave thanks to God for his protection and

assistance, unwound the skirts of his garment from his girdle, and taking, the crown, placed it upon his head.

“Long live King Bahram, the son of a King,” cried Chosroes, “and may the inheritance of his ancestors, which the Lord has now bestowed upon him, prosper in his hand: behold us all ready to hear and to obey him.” And all the Persians thereupon hailed him King, raising a loud shout. The Mobedan-Mobed going to him, and taking him by the hand, led him to the throne, invested him with his own hand with the insignia of royalty, and did homage to him, his example being followed by all the Lords of Persia. Then Bahram, mounting his horse, entered his capital, alighted before the palace of his father, and scattered treasure with a liberal hand amongst the valiant and the needy. He, moreover, bestowed great largesses upon No'man, invested him with the garments of royalty, crowned him,* and rewarded according to their degree all the Arabs who had assisted him in his undertaking. He faithfully observed all his promises, governed

* S.A. 536 has “Put on him the crown and bracelets.”

with mildness and justice, and merited the praises of his people until his death. The Persians have recorded many marvellous actions performed by him ; and two of these, which are, indeed, worthy of great honour, have been inscribed by me in my work entitled *Notices of Remarkable Children*. Moreover, God be praised for the grace which he bestowed upon this monarch !

CHAPTER V.

ABNEGATION.

§ I.—VERSES OF THE KORAN.

THE Lord our God, blessed be His name, turning himself to the wisest of all the vicars whom he had sent upon earth, the most learned of those charged with the execution of His divine pleasure—him whom He chose as an instrument for the fulfilment of His decrees, and the director of the observance of His precepts, whether explicitly stated or understood,—thus spake :—

“And cast not thine eyes on that which we have granted divers of the unbelievers to enjoy, namely, the splendour of this present life, that we may prove them thereby.”*

Which saying was revealed to the Prophet, when the choice being given him whether he would be a Prophet-king, or a Prophet-servant of God,

* Koran, chap. xx., v. 131.

he chose rather to have nothing whatever, than to have power, and nothing else.¹

VERSES.

Gabriel said unto him by the commandment of the Lord, The choice is given unto thee ; oh, thou who guidest men in the right path, make thy election.

Choose the gift of prophecy, together with a virtuous life, which would cause thee to gather the seventh arrow to-morrow.²

Or else with a sovereignty before which the most distant nations should bow down in terror with their foreheads in the dust.

And he made choice of that part which, by leading him to God, caused him to attain to the highest virtue and happiness.³

§ II.—TRADITIONS CONCERNING MAHOMET.

Instance of abnegation given by the Prophet, extracted from the tradition of Ibn Masû'd ; may God be well pleased with him ! *

The Prophet said : A king who lived in the

* Chap. I., n. 5. This tradition is not found in the Mishcat.

time of our forefathers was seized, during his reign, with fear—by which he meant, the fear of God, praised and magnified be His name!—On which account, having resigned the kingdom, he travelled so far that at length he reached the shores of the Nile; and, taking up his abode there, began to burn bricks, by which trade he earned his livelihood. The circumstance having come to the ears of the King of that country, he sent him a message in these terms: “Wait for me where you are; for I will come and seek you.” And accordingly he, too, having abandoned the throne, joined himself to the first king, and they dwelt together during the remainder of their lives. To this Abdallah Ibn Masû’d adds: If we were in Egypt, I could show you the tombs of these two kings, with the inscription recording that which God’s apostle has told us.

This tradition of Abd-Allah Ibn Masu’d has likewise been handed down to us in a different form, as follows: A king was once riding in solemn procession, when, turning his thoughts upon himself, he perceived that his mind was entirely occupied with the cares of his office, which

distracted his attention from the service of God, whose name he praised! Wherefore, departing by night from his palace, and traversing the realms of a neighbouring sovereign, he reached the Nile, upon the banks of which he began to burn bricks, and by this means to gain his daily bread. The king of that country being informed of his devout conduct, mounted his horse, and going to seek him, questioned him concerning himself. "I am such an one," replied he, "the sovereign of such a country, and I perceived that my dignity occupied me too much, and prevented me from attending to the worship of the Lord my God." "Oh," exclaimed the Egyptian, "how much better than mine is the path which thou hast chosen!" He then withdrew himself from the affairs of government, and followed the fortunes of the hermit prince; and they both served God in concert, praying that he would suffer them to die together; and so it came to pass. If we were there, added Abd-Allah Ibn Masû'd, I would show you their tombs, with the inscription stating that of which the apostle of God has informed us.

§ III.—PHILOSOPHICAL MAXIMS, IN PROSE AND VERSE,
CONCERNING ABNEGATION.

It is related that Soliman Ibn Abd-el Malik,⁴ being puffed up with vain glory on account of the power to which he had attained, said one day to Omar Ibn Abd-el Aziz, may God be satisfied with him: "Tell me, Omar, what think you of our station?" "O Prince of the Faithful," replied he, "it would be a pleasure, were it not of little worth; a blessing, if nothing were wanting to it; a power, if it were not to perish: it will be enjoyment, if it do not end with sorrow; delight, if it be not followed by suffering; and glory, if it be accompanied by virtue."

At these words the Caliph broke forth into such violent weeping that his whole beard was wet with tears.

On the same subject I have composed the following verses:

"Oh wretched man who art tormented and beguiled by the desire of that which thou needest not.

"If thy conquests were as vast as those of

Chosroes;* if thou possessedst so much treasure as he accumulated and enjoyed;

“Yet wouldst thou ever be tormented by the impotent desire to obtain more.

“For a life of peace is not granted upon earth, except to the wise, who know how to abstain.

“Seek therefore to practise abstinence; a virtue followed only by the elect.”

RHYMING PROSE.

Be on thy guard against a mansion which is an evil dwelling-place, for within it is breathed a subtle poison, and there inevitable torment is endured, although without, its appearance be that of a noble edifice, which being visible from afar, fills the breast of the traveller with hope.

VERSES.

This world of thine is a house filled with idle pastimes and borrowed goods.

A house filled with subtlety, with the eager pursuit of profit, with traffic and with booty.

* Chosroes Anúshirewán.

Thou hast a soul for thy capital: Oh ! take heed that this treasure be not spoiled.

Give not thy soul in exchange for banquets, perfumes, and splendid raiment.

And reflect that all which Solomon once possessed is no longer worth so much as a spark of fire.⁶

In a Kassidah⁷ on the same subject, I have said:

Of a surety we dwell in a country which favours its adversaries, and breaks faith with its allies.

A country which is powerless to oppose those who conspire against it, but which bars the path of its peaceable inhabitants.

He who seeks permission to make it his abiding home, desires that which is contrary to the customs of the place.

Oh how ready is its people, when assembled in the great temple, to attack the stranger that trusts in it !

Turn thee from this inhospitable land, lay aside thy desire to go thither ; show not thyself courteous unto those who frequent it.

Desist from the purchase of its vanities ; and if

thou hast purchased any give them up to the first bidder !

By my life ! I have done my utmost to give a salutary warning unto those that hear me.

I have proclaimed that this country is hastening, alas ! towards its doom ;

When God knoweth that only abstinence from the lusts which infect the country, can give a safe conduct against the disasters with which it is threatened.⁸

Again, I have written the following verses on the same subject :

Let abstinence be thy shield ; abstinence which signifies disdain of those superfluities which first attract thee, then tyrannise over thee, and lastly prove thy ruin.

Thou canst not indeed abstain from the things which are necessary for life, but well canst thou do so from every species of excess ;

Whether it be revelling in luxury, and delicate living, or hardening thyself in griping avarice.⁹

Much as we have seen and heard, we yet know no man, who ever accumulated great treasure with glory.

The covetous man is afflicted by his sin with constant trouble and anxiety.

And in the end he cannot escape from destiny ; that judge against whom we close our doors in vain.

§ IV.—THE DAUGHTER OF THE KING OF HIRA AND THE MUSSULMAN CAPTAIN, SA'D IBN ABI WAKKAS.¹⁰

It is related that Horka, the daughter of No'man Ibn Mondir, sirnamed Abû Kàbûs, sent to ask an audience in the city of Kadesia from Sa'd Ibn Abi Wakkas, may God be well pleased with him; and having obtained it, presented herself before him, followed by all her damsels, clad in sackcloth, and black vests, horrible to behold; nor could Horka be distinguished from her handmaids, seeing that like them she was habited in the vestments and veil of a nun. They all saluted Sa'd, who inquired of them: "Which of you is Horka?" "I am she," replied the daughter of No'man. "You Horka!" exclaimed Sa'd. "Yes," returned the woman, "I am she. O Emir, why should you ask me the second time? Alas! the world is but a temporary lodging, in which people come and go; so

that the same condition never continues for any length of time, and the guests are ever changing, and being hurled from one vicissitude into another. We were the sovereigns of this country, in which tribute was gathered for us, and of which the inhabitants obeyed us during a long course of years ; but when our race was run, the herald of fate called us with a loud voice, and our sceptre was broken, and the crowds of mighty men who thronged around us melted away. Such is fortune, O Sa'd, nor are there any on whom it has bestowed a benefit without following it up with a disaster which wrings the heart, or to whom it has granted joy that it does not cause it to alternate with sorrow. Then Horka recited the two following verses :

Whereas, at one time we ruled the people, and the public weal was our weal ; behold us now reduced to servitude, and placed on a level with the lowest of our subjects.

Fie upon the world, where good-fortune abides not, but now turns its face, and now its back upon thee ! *

* These two verses are given in the *Hamasa*, &c.

While Horka was speaking thus to Sa'd, Amr Ibn Ma'di Karib, of the tribe of Zobeid¹¹ came to visit him, and looking upon her, exclaimed : "Can you be Horka; beneath whose feet rich carpets of many-coloured silk used to be spread when she went from the palace to the church!"¹² "The same," replied she; and he resumed : "What then has befallen thee? Who has robbed thee of thy celebrated charms, dried up the sources of thy wealth, and quenched the impulses of thy vengeance?" "O Amr," replied she, "the vicissitudes of fortune are such, that they place kings on a level with the most abject slave : abase the mighty, and humble the proud. We, however, anticipated this calamity, and therefore will not complain, now that it has come to pass."

Sa'd then asked her wherefore she was come? whereupon she requested of him a subsidy for her maintenance, which the Emir liberally granted, and Horka having obtained what she desired, went her way. Being afterwards interrogated concerning the reception she had experienced from Sa'd, she replied in the following verse :—

"He hath fulfilled towards me the duties of a

protector,¹³ and hath courteously entreated me ; for it is only from noble souls that a noble soul receives honour."

Mohammad Ibn Zafer says: Having undertaken to speak of the abnegation of kings, we will treat only of that form of it to which refers the tradition of the Prophet quoted at the beginning of this chapter; that is, abnegation in the matter of sovereignty; the act of resigning and quitting the throne.

We will therefore not stop to discuss the abnegation of those kings who abstained from the luxuries of sovereignty without abdicating the throne, and who undertook the two-fold charge of governing men according to the rules of eternal justice, and of attending to the worship of God, leading at the same time a life of abstinence, as did David amongst the prophets, upon whom be the peace of God; and Abû Bekr amongst the upright Caliphs.¹⁴ This virtue is not included in the subject-matter of this book, and is of a higher grade than that which we have undertaken to pourtray. Let us now implore the assistance of God, and resume our task.

§ V.—ABDICATION OF THE CALIPH MOAWIA IBN YEZID.

On this subject we read that Moawia Ibn Yezid Ibn Moawia,¹⁵ was even from his childhood diligent in his studies, learned, fond of solitude, and early used to mortify his own inclinations for the love of God, and to reject the glittering gauds of this world's allurements. Being exalted to the Caliphate when scarcely seventeen years old, it immediately became an abomination to him; so that repenting of having taken so heavy a burden upon his own shoulders, he consulted his kinsfolk on the subject. They opposed him and disputed with him for full twenty days, doing their utmost to prevent him from proclaiming the aversion he felt for the sovereignty; and at length, perceiving that they could not deter him from his purpose of abdication, they entreated him to appoint one of them to succeed him. To this Moawia replied: "How can you suppose that, having swallowed the bitter pill of the abdication of power, I would further burden myself with the election of him who is to succeed me in it?"¹⁶ If I had thought it desirable for any living man, I would assuredly

have retained it myself!" He then hastened to harangue the people, informing them that he felt himself unable to sustain the weight of the government, and concluded by exhorting them to provide for themselves as should seem to them best. He released them from their oath of allegiance, and returned to his own house, where he shut himself up, refusing to see any living soul. Thus he lived for about five and twenty, or according to some, twenty days, and was then summoned to the presence of God, whose name he praised.

Ali Ibn Jahm, in his poem in the *ragiz* metre, says, in allusion to the history of this Caliph:

He was succeeded by his son, the lesser Moawia, the Weak;

A man filled with piety and wisdom,
Who sat on the throne of the Caliphs a month
and a half,

And was then overtaken by cruel death.

He left the people without imposing upon them
a successor,

From dread of the importance of the act, and
from the virtue of abnegation.¹⁷

Now although the words of Ali Ibn Jahm imply, that Moawia met his death without having resigned the Caliphate, yet the historical fact which is known to every one, is as I have related. It afterwards became customary to call this Caliph by the diminutive of his name, because he was held in small esteem, on account of his abdication and for the same cause he received the surname of Abû-Leïla,¹⁸ which it is customary to bestow upon the simple. I gather that the lesser Moawia was urged to so great a degree of abnegation, and to the resignation of the supreme power, by a dialogue which he overheard between two of his hand-maidens. These two girls, one of whom was of singular beauty, were disputing together, when the less beautiful one said: "You see that by your beauty you have captivated the greatest prince in the world." "And what sovereignty," replied she, "can be compared with that of beauty? It is the Cadi placed above all kings,¹⁹ and in it is supreme power." "And what," replied the other, "is the advantage of supreme power? Either a king walks in the straight path, according to the duties of his high office, his works bearing witness of his

gratitude to God ; and in that case he is deprived of all solace or repose, and his whole life is poisoned ; or else he suffers himself to be guided by his passions and gives himself up to luxury, neglecting his duties and showing himself ungrateful towards God ; and in that case he is hastening towards the flames of hell." These words made a deep impression on the mind of the young Moawia, and finally led to his abdication.

§ VI.—FAIR GARDEN AND EXCELLENT ARENA. ABDICATION
OF NO'MAN I. KING OF HIRA.

It is related that A'di Ibn Zeïd, the Ibadite, of the tribe of Temim,²⁰ a man standing high in the favour of the king of Persia, whom he served as secretary and interpreter, being on one occasion sent into the Roman empire as ambassador from this king, learned the wisdom and made himself acquainted with the books of that nation ; and, as some add,* became a Christian and practised self-denial. Moreover, Zeïd, the father of A'di, had already governed Hira for Mondir Ibn Mâ-essemâ.²¹ For all these reasons, A'di enjoyed great

* This expression is to be found in S. A. 536, only.

credit with the kings of Hira, of the race of Lakhm.

Now it is said, that one day, he being with No'man Ibn Imrulkais, king of Hira, in the castle of Khawarnak,²² of which we have before made mention; the king, turning his gaze on the surrounding country, for it was spring, and the earth was decking herself with her ornaments, stood for some time in contemplation of it, and became absorbed in earnest thought; nor did A'di venture to question him concerning the cause of his sadness, until the King turning to him, said, "Must then all that I behold, indeed pass away, be destroyed?" "Oh, Emir, you know that so it is," replied A'di. "Then," resumed No'man, "what is the worth of possessions so transitory and perishable!" After this he delayed not to become a Christian and a monk, and to go wandering about the world on pilgrimage.

Others relate the case differently. According to their tradition No'man had a great predilection for the flowers which were called after him Shakika-an-No'man,* because he was in the habit

* A species of anemone.

of frequenting the plains²³ where they abounded, and which he even constituted royal preserves. One beautiful spring-day, the King having gone to a Shakika, (which word in its original meaning signifies a sandy plain), all covered with these anemones, he began to contemplate them with great attention, admiring the symmetry and brilliant scarlet of their petals, the greenness of the stalk, and how when the flowers were rocked by the breath of the zephyrs, the dew fell drop by drop upon the ground. His soul delighting in this sight, he caused to be spread upon the ground a carpet of silk,* of various colours, resembling a garden covered with many species of flowers, upon which was erected a tent of scarlet *dibaj*, furnished with seats, cushions, pillows, couches, and other similar articles,²⁴ enveloped in a robe of scarlet silk dyed with *bahraman*,²⁵ which affords the most brilliant dye of that colour, and seated in his pavilion with the plain enamelled with flowers before his eyes, surrounded by the companions of his revels and his pleasures, and amongst them A'di Ibn Zeïd, the king began to carouse with his

* S.A. 535, says, vaguely, "a carpet covered with silk."

companions and to give ear to the music, and the vapours of the wine stimulated him to gaiety.

Afterwards, when this temporary excitement had subsided,²⁶ No'man reverted to sounder reflections, and entered into discourse with A'di in the manner described at the beginning of this paragraph. A'di seized the opportunity of giving him the warning which we have recorded, doing his utmost to strike home in order to rouse the King from his thoughtlessness. No'man listened to him willingly, and no longer wishing to remain where he was, mounted his horse and returned towards Hira, A'di riding by his side. When they reached a burial ground a short distance from the walls, "O King," said A'di, "may every curse be far removed from you;²⁷ hear you the voice that issues from these tombs?" "What says it?" replied No'man, and the poet answered, "Listen:"

"Oh, ye who spur on in haste to pass over the ground; reflect that we were once like unto you, and ye shall one day be even as we."²⁸

On hearing these words, his recent reflections returned to the mind of No'man, and the trouble

of his soul was manifest in his countenance, when the troop having reached a cluster of trees shaken by the wind,²⁹ which overshadowed a little lake of living waters, A'di, turning to the king, said, " May every curse be far removed from you ; do you hear the language of these trees ? " " What says it ? " asked the king, and A'di replied :

" Turn thy thoughts upon thyself, oh, thou that beholdest us ! Reflect that thou art about to overstep the fatal limit,

" Beyond which the vicissitudes of time are not felt, neither can calamity attain."³⁰

" How many others have here dismounted from their kneeling camels, and slaked their thirst with wine and with the limpid waters !

" They poured forth their liquor from precious flasks, garnished with streamers (*fedams*) ;³¹ their horses were covered with trappings.

" And they lived gaily for a space ; without making haste ; trusting to time.

" But they had not yet reached the meridian of their lives, when they were cut off by fate ; fate which carries off the lowly as well as the mighty.

“ And hurls him who follows after his own desires from one vicissitude to another.” ³²

According to others, A'di recited these verses to No'man as he had done the former ones, pointing to some other tombs near a cluster of habitations, between the first burial ground and the little wood above-mentioned.

But when he had reached the palace, No'man said to the poet: “ Come to me to-morrow at day-break, and you shall hear some news.” And returning the following day to the palace, A'di found the King clad in coarse sackcloth, in the guise of a pilgrim. No'man then took leave of him and departed and was heard of no more.

I, however, maintain, that the prince who became a hermit and a pilgrim was the other No'man Ibn Mondir, called the Elder, of whom A'di was not a contemporary, but only made mention of him in his poems. A'di lived in the reign of No'man Ibn Mondir, the younger; and undertook to admonish this prince in the manner that we have related; in consequence of which he became a Christian, but not a pilgrim. The latter, moreover, is the same No'man who put to

death the poet A'di, and retained the kingdom until he was himself put to death by Chosroes. As to the rest, God knows the truth.³³ Here, moreover, are some further verses of A'di on the same subject :

“Oh, thou who revilest and speakest evil of Fate, art thou exempt from all blame ; art thou free from the weaknesses of human nature.

“Either hast thou in thy possession an agreement in which the number of thy days is told? Or art thou not rather a fool deceived by the vanities of the world?

“Arouse thyself, and remain for ever in the world, thou who hast seen the work of death ! * Or tell me whether man had ever so much power over it as to defraud the sepulchre of its prey.

“Whither is Chosroes Anûshîrewân gone, the greatest amongst monarchs ?³⁴ Whither did Sapor go before him ?

“And they of the fair-haired race, the gallant kings of the Romans ;³⁵ why doth no memorial remain of any one of them ?

* S. A. 536, instead of the word signifying time or death, has “days,” for the signification of which see Note 1, Chap. i.

“ And the monarch who built Hadhr,³⁶ where flow the Tigris and the Khabur !

“ He incrusted his palace with marble, and raised his roofs so high that the birds made their nests upon the ridges thereof.³⁷

“ The thought of death never entered his mind, and, behold, when the kingdom was taken from him, his gates were deserted by all !

“ And call to mind the lord of Khawarnak, who one day looking down from the towers of his castle, and being moved to salutary reflections,

“ At first rejoiced in the contemplation of all his possessions, of the land which obeyed him, and of the majestic river, and of his palace of Sedir,³⁸ which he had before his eyes :

“ But turning speedily to wisdom, exclaimed, What happiness can there be in a life, which is ever tending towards the grave !

“ Favourites of fortune, kings, and lawgivers, all here are laid within the tomb.

“ And their ashes are as the withered leaf which is whirled in the air now by the east wind, and now by the west wind.”³⁹

§ VII.—FAIR GARDEN AND EXCELLENT ARENA. ABDICATION
OF A KING OF THE HELLENES.

* It is related of a King of the ancient Greeks, that on rising one morning from his bed, the mistress of the robes brought him his clothes. "When he was dressed, the maiden presented a looking-glass to him, in which he contemplated himself, and seeing that he had a white hair in his beard, he said to her : "Damsel, give me those scissors;" and when she had brought him the scissors, he cut out the white hair and gave it to the damsel, who being quick-witted and of a cultivated understanding, laid the hair in the palm of her hand, held it to her ear, and remained for some time in a listening attitude. The King looked at her fixedly, and then enquired what she was doing; to which she replied: "I am listening to the words of this white hair, whose appearance is sufficient to disturb the highest dignity that exists on earth, since a king is enraged against it, and seeks to exterminate it." "And what do you gather from its words?" asked the King again; and the damsel replied: "My understanding

* I can nowhere find any trace of this anecdote.

thinks to hear it utter a discourse which my tongue dares not repeat, for fear of the anger of the King." "Say what you will," returned the monarch, "and fear nothing so long as you tread the paths of wisdom ;" and thereupon the damsel continued thus :

"The white hair says, oh, powerful ephemeris of the earth, I judged rightly that you would seize upon me and maltreat me. Therefore I did not show myself above your skin until I had laid my eggs and hatched them, and seen my little ones come forth, to whom I have bequeathed the charge of making you pay the penalty of my death. And they are already grown and have set to work to avenge me, so that they will either slay you on a sudden, or they will trouble all your pleasure and undermine your strength, until at last death shall seem to you a relief." "Write down that discourse," answered the King; and when the damsel had done so, he read it once and again, and then hastened with all speed to a temple of great renown, where having laid aside his regal robes, he assumed the habit of the priests of that sanctuary. This becoming known to his subjects, they hastened to the temple, vying with each other

in their prayers to him to return to the palace, and to resume the government of his kingdom ; but he would not hear of it, and insisted that they should consent to his abdication, and raise up another king in his stead ; while his subjects, on their side, would not yield, but tried every means of dissuading him from his purpose. At length the priests interposed, and it was stipulated that the king should stay and worship God in the sanctuary, and should administer such part of the affairs of the state as he should think fit, and commit the rest to others. And this he did so long as he lived. And God knows whether all this be true.

§ VIII.—FAIR GARDEN AND EXCELLENT ARENA. CONVERSION
OF A KING OF THE ALANS TO CHRISTIANITY.⁴¹

I have read that the Alans had once a heathen King, a proud and ruthless man, who, even in his youth was so matured in arrogance, that when he appeared in public, he permitted no one to raise his voice except to praise and eulogise him, and to return him thanks for his goodness. This king had for his Vizier a Christian,⁴² who believed in God

(may His name be magnified and glorified), but concealed his faith. This man, purposing to convert the King, seized upon every opportunity which presented itself for so doing, and had meanwhile gained many proselytes in the country.

It came to pass one day that as the King was riding along the road, an old man raised his voice to petition him concerning some business of his, whereupon he commanded the guards to seize him. When they laid hands upon him, the old man exclaimed, "God is my Lord!" and, on hearing these words, the Vizier commanded that he should be released. It need scarcely be said that the King was moved to great indignation by this proceeding, yet did he not reverse the order on the spot, lest the people should perceive that any one had dared to contradict his commands; and to make it appear as though the Vizier had acted according to the mind of the king, he kept silence until he returned to the palace; then having summoned the Vizier, he asked him, "What can have moved you to contradict an order of mine in the presence of my slaves?" "If the King will have patience," replied the Vizier, "I hope to prove to him that if

I have displeased him, it has been out of loyalty, affection, and anxiety for his welfare." "Let us have proof of it," replied the King;" "I will not judge you harshly." The Vizier then entreated him to conceal himself in the hall, so that he might see and hear all that passed, and the King having consented, he caused to be brought to him a magnificent bow which had been made for the King's especial use, by one of his servants, who had inscribed his own name upon it. The Vizier gave it to a page who was in attendance to hold, saying to him, "The artificer who made this bow will come hither presently; when I begin to speak to him, do you read his name, which is written here, aloud, and when you are sure that he has heard you, then break the bow."

The armourer having appeared, and the page having followed to the letter the directions of the Vizier, the former, seeing his work thus destroyed, could not restrain himself from raising his hands against the page, whose head he broke. "Villain!" exclaimed the Vizier, "how is it that you dare to beat my page in my presence?" "My lord," replied the armourer, "that bow was of my

making, and was a masterpiece of beauty and perfection; why, then, did he destroy it?" "Perhaps he did not know that you were the maker of it," said the Vizier. "But of that the bow itself informed him." "How so?" "To be sure it did," replied the armourer. "Here is my name written upon it with my own hand; and he read it, and I heard him."

As this was all the Vizier wanted, he dismissed the armourer, and turning to the King, "I have now shown," said he, "that what I did was done from fidelity and affection to the King. The King was pleased to inveigh against an old man, who signified to him that God was his Lord. Now, had I not cause to fear that this Lord, against the power of whose arm there is no defence, might turn against the King?" "How," exclaimed the King; "has that old man, then, another Lord besides myself?" "Let the King reflect," replied the Vizier, "that he is young, and that man very old, the King assuredly could not be his master before he was born." "He belonged to my father," replied the King. And the Vizier returned, "How can a man remain a servant when his master is no

more? O King! the old man was speaking of that Master who gave him his being, of Him who made him in the form of a man, and who preserved him alive; He alone has a right to his service and gratitude; He is my Lord, the Lord of everything; He is God!"⁴³ "You have kindled a spark in my bosom," replied the King, "which will not be quenched."⁴⁴ I now perceive that both masters and slaves must necessarily have an immortal Lord above them; but if you know this Lord, endeavour to show Him to me." "Assuredly I know Him," rejoined the Vizier: and the King continued, "Teach me then to know Him, and I promise you to be your disciple so long as I live." "To lead you to know Him is my first duty," answered the Vizier; "and, as to making yourself my disciple, be it known to you, O King! that He in whose footsteps you will tread, will ever be your slave, and would willingly shed his life's blood to save you from the torture of doubt in matters of religion."

The Vizier then sought to instruct him in the knowledge of God, whose Name be praised. And God so opened the heart of this prince that he

received the faith, and made profession of it." Then turning to the Vizier, "Are there not," inquired he, "any peculiar ways of serving our Lord, so that by putting them into practice, His favour may be obtained?" "Assuredly there are," replied the Vizier. "God himself has commanded the observance of certain acts of piety, and he who performs them is accepted of Him, and obtains the promise of Divine grace and favour." He then informed him concerning prayer and fasting, and the other religious precepts of the Messiah, upon whom be the peace and blessing of God; and the King began to exercise himself in these acts of piety until they had become familiar to him, and he was accustomed to put them in practice.

At length one day he said to the Vizier, "Why do you not proclaim faith in God to the people as you have done to me?" To which the Vizier replied, "Oh! most excellent prince, the Alans are a nation hard of heart, slow of intellect, and intractable of spirit, and I should not feel secure of my life, were such words to pass my lips." "Well, then, if you will not, I will do so my-

self," replied the King. "Be it known unto the King," replied the Vizier, "that if respect for his name does not suffice to defend me from the rage of the people, it will not be able to defend even himself. No, rather will I give my life for that of the King, and when they have put me to death, as they assuredly will, let the King beware of repeating the attempt." Having determined upon this, the Vizier convened a meeting at his house of the civil magistrates, judges, priests, sages, and chief men of the country, and then rose to harangue them, and call them to the worship of God, whose name be praised. They immediately rushed upon him and slew him, and then, bearing the corpse into the presence of the King, informed him of the crime of the Vizier and of its punishment, stating, in conclusion, that they suspected the King of holding the same opinions, and therefore besought him to speak his mind. The King, concealing his real sentiments, told them that they had done well in slaying the Vizier, and sent them away fully satisfied. But it was not long before he abdicated the throne, and shut himself up in a monastery, where he lived until

God called him to Himself; the Lord having, meanwhile, avenged the Vizier by the extermination of his murderers.

§ IX.—FAIR GARDEN AND EXCELLENT ARENA: PHILOSOPHIC
SELF-DENIAL OF BABEK, SON OF ARDSHIR, FIRST OF THE
SASSANIDES.

It is related, that Ardshir Ibn Babek Ibn Sassan,* in his early youth, and at the commencement of his power, had a son, to whom he gave the name of Babek, which was also that of his own father. This child having grown up no less beautiful in person than promising in intellect, Ardshir became extremely attached to him, and entrusted his education to a philosopher, a man of comprehensive views, holding sound principles of wisdom, and inclined to a life of great austerity, who was entreated by Ardshir to look upon the youth as his own son. He having removed his pupil from his father's house, subjected him to such a course of instruction, that by degrees the young man was enabled to bear the weight

* For the accession of Ardshir, see the Introduction, and Note 40, to Chap. iii.

of philosophical learning and the burden of self-denial.

Now, when Ardshir aspired to supreme power in Persia, and so successfully attained his end, that the petty princes of the country acknowledged him as their sovereign, it frequently occurred to him to consult his son in affairs of moment, and he found Babek all that he could wish, except inasmuch as the young man always sought, both by his words and actions, to inspire his father with a great dislike for the things of this world. He represented its vices as insupportable, set forth its guilt, and constantly repeated that we must look to the fearful end of this delusion. All this troubled Ardshir not a little, in the midst of his joy at beholding the virtues of his son.

It was said, he who offers to princes that which does not please them, must not complain if he abide in a low estate.

It rarely comes to pass, that a prince is able to fix his mind so steadfastly upon one idea as to devote to it his whole attention, without suffering any other to share it. The reason of this is, that he finds himself immersed in many

different matters of business, each of which reclaims his powers for itself, so that scarcely has he inclined towards one and nearly made himself master of it, before he is diverted from it by some other. Therefore, when you see him absorbed in one idea, never seek to force upon him another which will rise up before him just as he was about to seize upon the first.

Ardshir tolerated his son's peculiarity, on account of the love he bore him, and also from pity, and the hope of curing him. One day, being together with him, he asked him: "Oh, Babek, do you know who is your father?" "Most fortunate prince," replied he, "I have two fathers; one of whom is the author of my being, and the other that of my salvation—and both of them I acknowledge and revere." "Explain to us which is the father who is the author of your being," replied Ardshir; and the young man answered him in nearly these words:—"It is he who fills the eyes of the people with his glory, and their ears with the sound of his praise; who inspires their understandings with reverence, and their hearts with affection. The monarch, whose

clemency embraces all things, whose justice never errs, whose government is upright, and the vigour of whose arm causes the heart of the guilty to fall from their bosoms, and their swords from the scabbards—who preserves the just from wild beasts,* and from venomous serpents; “the monarch whose sword and whose valour lay open the bosoms of men, even as thin leaves of paper, and whose moderation and generosity captivate their affections.”⁴⁷

“And who,” resumed Ardshir, is the father whom you look upon as the author of your salvation?” “A sage,” replied Babek; “one who knows the dignity of his own soul, and honours it and serves it.” “Tell me in what way he serves his soul?” asked Ardshir, and the young man replied: “The sage, when he contemplates his own soul, beholds in it a fertile soil, rejoicing in every good gift of God; springs of water, lofty trees, fruits which attain to maturity, cool shades, and undying breezes; but there lurk the lions of anger, the panthers of ignorance, the wolves of perfidy, the wild boars of violence, the dogs of avarice, the hyenas of folly, the serpents

* Literally *dhārīi* “beasts.”—See Note 43, to Chap. iv.

of injustice, the scorpions of envy. He, therefore, expels all these noxious animals, and so watches over and defends his property, that they cannot return thither, and thus rendering it a habitation of unqualified prosperity, without any admixture of evil."

Ardshir, being more than ever convinced by these words of his son's aversion to the sovereignty, and of his inclination to reject or resign it, was deeply grieved, and said to him, "Wisdom, O Babek, will never be sufficient alone to content him who possesses it, if he feels himself capable of governing and controlling others,* if he behold himself governed and subjugated instead." "Most fortunate prince," replied his son, "you have undoubtedly hit the mark. But the man who is governed and subjugated is he who is driven by his own passions to torment himself for the profit of others." "Nevertheless," replied Ardshir, "the monarchs of greatest fame have exerted themselves to the utmost for the good of their subjects, being moved thereto not by their own passions, but by the desire to find grace in the eyes of the

* This passage, as far as Note 49, is found in S. A. 536 only.

Lord, who gives understanding, and loves the benefactors of the human race." "Oh," answered Babek, "it is not all monarchs upon whom such grace is bestowed, but only upon those who, in respect to their personal convenience, put themselves on a level with the poorest of their subjects, and thus show themselves to be utterly exempt from egotism; those who devote the whole of their powers, and all the time required to the affairs of the government, and thus escape the charge of indolence; those who lock every breath of passion to silence in their souls, when it behoves them to take with the one hand and give with the other, to raise one person to a post of confidence and dismiss another, to grant or to refuse,⁴⁸ to punish or to pardon; by which means they may avoid every shadow of injustice. Now, to possess these qualities is a thing more singular than the griffin, more marvellous than alchemy, and rarer than red gold."⁴⁹

"Meanwhile, if the king will grant me permission, I will relate to him a parable which will show who is the Lord and the conqueror, and who the subjugated and the slave." "Say on," replied Ardshir, and Babek continued:

§ X.—THE TWO ELEPHANTS.

It is related, that a certain king was possessed of a tame and trained elephant, which he valued highly. The king's huntsmen having caught a wild elephant, which the trainers could neither train, break in, nor tame by any means, they devised associating him with the trained elephant, in order to accustom him to do the same things. This was accordingly tried, but without success—for the new elephant became only more shy and intractable, and in order to reduce him to submission, the trainers had recourse to chastisements, kept him in confinement, and deprived him of food. While he was undergoing these hardships, the tame elephant one day said to him,⁵⁰ "You are offending against your own interests, and acting very unwisely for yourself, and that from ignorance; for if you knew all the good that they wish to do you, you would assuredly not behave in this manner."

It was said, that stupidity is a curtain which prevents the understanding from perceiving the right path.

The ignorant man is no better than a walking corpse amongst the living, who goes stumbling on his way, and whose brain is corrupt.

As you would not give an honourable damsel, your kinswoman, to one who did not demand her in marriage, according to customary form, even so abstain from imparting the maxims⁵¹ of your wisdom to one who does not ask for them.

The wild elephant then asked the tame one what it really was that they wanted to do with him; and the latter replied: "To feed you better, to give you sweet waters to drink, to see to your cleanliness, and to that of the place where you lie; to give you servants to wait upon you, guard you, take care of you, and lead you forth at appointed hours known to all, so that the people will assemble in crowds to see you. Moreover, you will be covered with dibaj draperies preceded by kettle-drums⁵² and musical instruments, which move the affections, and excite the imagination, and you will be publicly honoured and revered, so that no animal shall venture to cross your path, nor even any breath of air to blow in your disparagement."⁵³ "Faith! I have a mind to try it," replied

the other elephant; and laying aside his wildness and stubbornness, he lent himself to everything that was required of him, and thereupon was caressed, served, and held in honour, and everything supplied to him in great abundance. Then, when the day of the festival was come, every attention was paid to him; he was rubbed down with the utmost care, covered with housings, and a richly adorned howdah was placed upon his back, into which mounted a number of warriors, armed with corslets, helmets, and clubs of iron.⁵⁴ A guide armed with a goad, seated himself astride upon his neck, a covering of mail was drawn over his trunk, at the end of which a sword was fastened by the hilt; the grooms, likewise, armed with cuirasses and iron clubs, posting themselves on either side of him, laid hold of his tusks. Then the kettle-drums and castanets⁵⁵ sounded, and the procession put itself in motion, with the elephant, and proceeded to the appointed place.

When he had returned to his stable, however, the elephant thus addressed his companion: "I have made trial," said he, "of all the advantages of which you spoke to me, but I found certain

additions to them concerning which I desire some explanation." "Ask what you will," said the tame elephant; and the other continued. "Tell me what were the heavy burdens that were placed upon my back?" "The howdah, with the warriors and implements of war?" "And what was it that they put round my trunk and at the end of it, and what was the object of those who held on to my tusks, and of the man who rode upon my neck?" "Why, they covered your trunk with a coat of mail, in order to preserve it from wounds, being a vital part; and fastened on to the end of it a sword, with which you might fight against the enemy. As for those who held your tusks, their business was to ward off the foe if they should attack you, and to aid you in the assault. Lastly, the man who rode upon your neck was to guide you wherever it was necessary that you should go." "It is for this, then," replied the wild elephant, "that they feed me so well, supply me with pure water, keep me and the litter upon which I lie so delicately clean, utter my name with applauses, and cover me with housings! I now perceive plainly that in all this the advantage

is not equal to the annoyance, nor the benefit to the injury ; and from henceforward I shall assuredly be the most eager of those who have ever eagerly desired their liberty."

It was said, he who concerns himself about others, takes their burdens on his own shoulders.

Since want places you in subjection to others, and enslaves you the more the more it presses, it is manifest that men are the servants of worldly goods, and that they have the heaviest yoke to bear who have the most need of them.

If the meaning of slavery be to serve others, and to have need of them, then these three are indeed slaves—a king, a lover, and one who has received a benefit ; for they are all three in captivity, both outwardly and inwardly. And of these, the most enslaved is the king, since he is bound to serve his subjects both with body and mind ; that is, to govern them, to instruct them, to defend them from their enemies, to put them in the way of prosperity, to restrain the froward, to succour the oppressed, to provide for the security of the highways, to strengthen the frontiers ; to take measures beforehand for the maintenance of the laws,

and for the defence of the people in the event of war ; to collect the superfluous wealth of individuals, and to expend it for the good of the public ; to remove all occasion of popular agitation, and causes of civil discord and sedition. Besides all this, he stands continually in need of his subjects ; nor is the trouble slight which he has to endure, in guarding his own person, carrying on the government, seeking out such as are able to give him good counsel and repulsing the enemy.⁵⁶

Having listened to the discourse of the wild elephant, the tame one perceived that it was he who was the most foolish, thoughtless, and wanting in penetration of the two ; he, therefore, replied to him : “ The wise have well said that ignorance covers the eyes with a bandage, and alters the substance of things, and that he who is in error is deserving of forgiveness unless he be smitten with admiration for his own errors ; for if it reaches that pitch, he becomes totally blind.”

Then, turning to the wild elephant, he said : “ In return for the wise counsel that you have given me, and for the manner in which you have opened my eyes to the truth, I will show you a

cunning device, by means of which you may recover your liberty; for I am better acquainted than you are with the manners and customs of men, and therefore can more easily find a way of escape from their hands. After which, I will follow you and be your servant for the rest of my life."

The two elephants then agreed to feign themselves afflicted with the *regez*, an illness which attacks camels and elephants in their hind quarters, making them tremble to such a degree, when they endeavour to stand upon their legs, as almost to cause them to fall, and which is cured by bleeding the animal, and making it walk about slowly. Thus, no sooner did the two elephants appear to be suffering, than the keepers hastened to apply this remedy, and then conducted them to the open plain where they left them at liberty; and they perceiving themselves to be at some distance from any habitations, seized the opportunity of flight, and thus recovered the liberty for which they longed.*

* The tale ends thus in S. A. 536. The other MSS. add, "and they found a female elephant."

§ XI.—CONTINUATION OF THE HISTORY OF BABEK.

When Ardshir had heard his son's story to the end, he was troubled by it, and fixed his eyes on the ground without speaking, thinking upon him, and henceforward despairing of bringing him to consent to his wishes. He then arose, and making a sign to Babek to follow him, took him to the treasury, and to the place where the crown jewels were kept; and having shown him these treasures and called his attention to their immense value, when he had concluded this display he thus addressed him: "To whom, O Babek, would you leave all this wealth? To some one, perhaps, whom you love better than yourself, and who is more worthy of it?" "Most fortunate prince," replied his son, "if you will permit me, I will relate to you a parable which will serve as an answer to your question." "Say on," answered Ardshir, and Babek continued:—

§ XII.—THE HERDSMAN AND THE HERMIT.⁵³

It is related that the oxen belonging to the inhabitants of a certain village were kept by a

Herdsmen, who was diligent in leading them to pasture and to repose, and who continued for a long time to perform this service to the complete satisfaction of the proprietors, who, perceiving the value of his care and the increase of his cattle, were never weary of praising him. So well were they pleased with him, and such implicit confidence had they in his integrity and capacity for the charge, that they never required of him to give account of the herd entrusted to his keeping.

It was said, you love him in whom you have confidence, and he who is faithful is deserving of affection.

Probity and fidelity are praised by every tongue, and find favour in the sight of all men.

This Herdsman was in the habit of spending the hours of noon in the neighbourhood of a hermitage, where he would stretch himself out in the shade bewailing and lamenting the hard life he led, until the Hermit, moved to compassion by the poor man's complaints, one day asked him : " Oh ! Herdsman, what ails you that I never hear you do anything but bewail yourself and cry, ' alas ? ' " " I complain," replied the Herdsman, " of the great trouble that I

have to endure in keeping the cattle, preserving it from all danger, and driving it hither and thither in search of the richest pastures ; for I do this as no one else would, and it costs me incredible exertions.” “ And what motive,” continued the Hermit, “ induces you to give yourself so much trouble for the comfort of others? Your next of kin and he who has the most right to your care and attention is surely your own self ! ” “ But,” answered the Herdsman, “ if I left off taking this trouble, the herd would not be nearly so numerous or so flourishing as you see it. The day that it was first entrusted to my keeping its numbers were scanty, and the cows lean and dry ; so that they neither adorned the meadows, nor filled the pails with milk.” “ You are evading my question,” replied the Monk, “ even as one who refuses to answer an enquiry, and will not attend to it. I merely ask you the reason why you weary yourself for the benefit of others, and prefer the convenience of your neighbour to your own enjoyment ; and you in reply tell me of the fatigues you endure, and the great care and anxiety that you display. Now try to explain to me the motive of all this zeal and diligence.”

“By the pains that I take with the cattle,” replied the Herdsman, “I gain this: that I can eat what I please, and give to whom I please of the flesh of any of the animals which may perish by falling over precipices. Then I make use of the milk and other produce of the herd neither more nor less than the owners themselves. Lastly, I lead them to graze wherever I please and think fit; and they are, in fact, like my own property managed by myself.”

The Hermit having listened to his words made answer. “This is exactly the way that a simple monk deceived himself; but at last he became aware of the folly of his belief.”

“Tell me how this befel,” replied the Herdsman; and the hermit continued.

§ XIII.—THE RESTORATION OF A DESERTED MONASTERY.

It came to pass that the monk in question being on pilgrimage, reached a monastery, which had been in former days a splendid edifice, but of which the walls were now crumbling away on every side. The situation was delightful, and in front of it extended a vast and fertile territory, watered by limpid streams, yet the monastery was in-

habited only by a very few monks, and those in the lowest stage of poverty and degradation. The Pilgrim captivated by the beauty of the spot, halted there; and being a robust, active, and industrious man, he restored the ruined walls, cultivated the farm, cleaned out the canals which had been cut for the purpose of irrigation, caused the waters to flow once more into them, and planted trees of various descriptions. The revenues of the monastery having been greatly increased by these means, attracted thither many new monks; the society increased and the Pilgrim made himself the head of it. He then bought slaves, beasts of burden, and implements of agriculture, and by little and little added the neighbouring territory to the demesne of the convent. He made extensive plantations of vines, olives, and almond trees, and both the productions of the soil and the tribute^{oo} being thus increased, the pilgrim, eager to accumulate wealth, began to repulse the applications of the needy, and within short space of time had amassed a considerable treasure.

It was said: Riches are like water, he who does not open a sluice to carry off its superabundance is drowned in it at last.

The assistance which we afford others by means of our wealth and influence, is an amulet to preserve them both.*

Being thus defrauded by the Pilgrim, and perceiving that he left them empty-handed while he took everything for himself, the monks began to complain, and to speak evil of him; and all those who had formerly shown him reverence, now turned against him, until coming at length to an open rupture, they publicly admonished him to make a just division, and to employ a part of the wealth he had accumulated in works of charity. To this the Pilgrim replied: "Wherefore should I give you that which is mine, and which I have gained with toil and difficulty, by the labour of my own hands?" "That has nothing to do with it," retorted the monks; "these riches belong to God, and each one of us has a right to his share, excepting inasmuch as you have a claim to a larger portion, as a reward for the manner in which you have administered and augmented the revenue." "Well," replied the Pilgrim, "you shall see who is master."

And at night he caused his slaves to cut down

* See Chap. II., § iii., before note 8.

a thousand vines, as many olives, and as many almond trees, so that it was a melancholy sight the following day to behold the ground strewn with them. Not knowing that it was his doing, the monks immediately hastened to give notice of the calamity to the Pilgrim, who repulsed them sharply, saying: "The trees are my property, what does it matter to you whether they are preserved or destroyed?" And the monks perceiving by these words that he was the author of the mischief, all rushed upon him with blows and abuse, and at length expelled him from the monastery, so that he went forth as poor as he had come.

But, as he departed, having gone a little way, he gazed around upon the lands which he had brought into cultivation, and the plantations he had made, and on beholding this gorgeous sight," he sighed deeply, as he reflected with grief how he had wasted his youth, his strength, and the best years of his life, in an undertaking from which no profit accrued to him. And then he went on his way in loneliness and obscurity, in poverty and weakness, muttering

these words: The wise men were right when they said: ⁶²

The world is a road which we traverse but do not inhabit; a temporary shelter but not a lasting dwelling-place.

It is a narrow bridge which, if it be crossed with caution, leads the traveller to a happy home; but he who lingers to amuse himself falls from it and is lost.

The wise have said: If to-day you enjoy the goods of this world in peace, to-morrow you will be despoiled of them: if one moment they are yours, the next they are torn from your grasp. Therefore, amongst all the favourites of fortune, he only is wise who provides against her treachery; for which purpose all he has to do is to prepare his mind as well for the vicissitudes which may deprive him of his possessions, as for the fatal summons which will compel him to leave them. And can he be well prepared for this, who sets his affections upon this world's goods?

No one assuredly can leave them with pleasure; but we may dispose our minds to it by accustom-

ing them to abstinence during the course of this uncertain and transitory life, and laying up a treasure of good works for the life to come.

He who is accustomed to a luxurious life will sigh far more bitterly than another over its loss; and if it be suddenly taken from him, he will be choked with sobs.

Let him who longs to obtain power know how to resign it betimes; and let him who seeks to accumulate riches cultivate such virtues as may serve him for an escort, when he strikes his tents in this world.

Too eager a longing for the gauds of this world, destroys peace, and brings with it many sorrows.*

The monk after this resumed his pilgrimage, and in a short space he died.

§ XIV.—CONCLUSION OF THE STORY OF THE HERDSMAN AND
THE HERMIT.

The Herdsman having heard these words of the Hermit, and having reflected upon the parable

* This and the foregoing maxim are only to be found in S. A. 536.

thus presented to him, failed not to perceive the wisdom of the maxim contained in it. "May God reward you," said he, "for the admonition you have given me. But, now that by your allusions you have conveyed to me a lesson which I have taken home to myself; now that you have opened my understanding to receive good counsel, and have cleansed my mind from the rust of folly, tell me what you think I ought to do in the circumstances in which I am placed." To this the Hermit made answer: "I have now given you evident proof of the error into which you have fallen, in regarding that which was committed to your charge, to watch over it and to guard it, as belonging to yourself; and have torn from your eyes the bandage of ignorance, which made you act for the advantage of others and to your own injury, for the sake of scanty gains and vain and false imaginings. Now, therefore, restore the cattle to their owners, and think henceforward of yourself. Seek to deliver yourself from beasts of prey, from poisonous vipers,* howling mastiffs, rapacious eagles, muttering devils, hideous snares, and deadly

* The words I have here translated "poisonous vipers," are the same as those used at note 46.

poisons ; and thus you will be able to escape from perdition, and ascend into the world of light.⁶³

§ XV.—DISAPPEARANCE OF BABEK.

Having concluded these parables, Babek was silent ; and Ardshir remained absorbed in reflection concerning the reasoning and the similes put forth by his son. He then rose to his feet, troubled and agitated, and burning with indignation ; and Babek immediately quitted the palace, and went forth as a wanderer no one knew whither.

CONCLUSION.

Mohammad Ibn Zafer, the poor and lowly servant of God, content to abide his holy will, whose sins may God assail, thus sayeth : Behold, now, thanks be to God, I have brought the task I undertook to the end that I had in view. I now commend myself to God, in order that He may spare me the suffering of being deprived of the light of His countenance and excluded from His favour ; and I likewise implore Him that He may

support me under the trial of interrogation, and spare me the necessity of answering by groans ;⁶⁴ that He would deliver me from sin, and save me from an evil end ; and to Him only do I turn, for He is the God of mercy and of blessings.

NOTES TO CHAPTER II.

(CONTINUED.)

¹ *Ain-ahlih*, literally "the eye (or as we should say) the pearl of his family."

Sitt-an-nar, "the lady of fire."

² This saying, the only merit of which is the rhyme in the original, is only to be found in S.A. 536.

³ I have translated literally "the world of being," and "the world of corruption," sin, or dissolution; in Arabic, *fesàd*. The same expression, "*the world of fesàd*," occurs again further on in this chapter (see note ⁶), with apparently a different meaning, not metaphysical but moral. These terms appear inappropriate, since "corruption" is not the converse of "being" or existence; nor can the expression "world of corruption" be made to express the separation of the soul and body. The doctrine of the Magi, however, removes this difficulty. According to it, Hormuzd, one of the manifestations of the divine power, created the world, in which he endeavoured to preserve order, happiness, and life. Ahriman, another, and oppo-

sing manifestation, (which, as I do not understand this philosophy, I cannot undertake to explain,) seeks to ruin the work of Hormuzd, and to bring into the world confusion, misery, death, and, in short, every species of evil, whether moral or physical. But that which Hormuzd has created, his enemy cannot destroy, but only deface; and it is upon this principle, that are based the religious hopes of the Magi; that in the end, Hormuzd will triumph, and Ahriman himself, the evil principle, be converted into good. In this system, therefore, corruption, and not destruction, is the contrary of existence; and death and sin, physical and moral disorder, equally belong to the world of corruption.

Ibn Zafer has succeeded perfectly in interpreting into Arabic these terms belonging to a foreign language, and a foreign creed. It would be interesting to know the word that he has rendered *nafs*, "soul" or "spirit." It appears that the Magi recognised two kinds of spiritual essences, namely: the *honower*, or vital principle, possessed alike by men and animals; and the *ferwer*, or undying spark of the Divine word, or Infinite Intelligence. The undisguised materialism of the tone in which he speaks of the changes of condition experienced by the soul, and of its attainment of perfection at the centre of its earthly race, would lead us to conclude that it is of the *honower* that the Persian author treats in this instance. The sentence which I

translate "the change which engrafts it upon the body," is literally, "since it (the soul) transfers itself into the world of being by means of the *tarkib*," a word which signifies putting on horse-back, super-addition, insertion, and is used by metaphysicians to symbolise the union of the soul and the body. This sentence appears to have been translated from the *Pehlwi* narrative, for in the first edition it is not preceded by the formula, "the author says," or, "it was said ;" but is merely given in continuation of the vizier's tale, thus: "he was struck with admiration and amazement, although she was not in reality more beautiful than Sitt-an-nar; but of a truth one of the most irresistible impulses, etc."

¹ *Ad-dib* signifies "the wolf." *Sitt-ad-dahab*, "the lady of gold."

² The author here falls into the error of pitching the tents of the Bedouins of Arabia in "our Galicia," just as the great dramatists of France used to represent the ancient Greeks and Romans in wigs and hoops.

³ Sheikh, in its proper signification is an old man, and became a title of honour like that of senator. In some tribes, the chief, or the heads of families were called Sheikhs. It is here employed as a title of courtesy.

The MS. s.A. 536, here diverges considerably from all the rest, which affords another proof that

it is a specimen of an earlier edition of the work. In s.a. 536, the fable of the horse and the wild boar, is related much further on. The old woman does not believe the words of Ain-Ahlih, who asserts his innocence, and therefore makes him detail to her his adventures, and thus points out to him how he has brought his misfortunes upon himself. The young man, nevertheless, implores her to deliver him, promising to obey her during the whole of her life, as a son or a slave, but obtains no answer. The following day, Ad-dib comes to maltreat and to threaten him. Inpatient of the suffering he has to endure, he despairs of the assistance of the old woman; and she, in order to console him, the next night relates to him her own history, and resolves to free him from his fetters and then to kill herself. Finally they effect their escape together. Sapor recognises in this tale himself, his vizier, Kaisar, etc., and takes comfort. The author here interrupts the narrative in order to insert the following words (fol. 34 verso):

“The author of the book, may God be merciful to him, says: All that I have related hitherto concerning Walid Ibn Yezid and him who conversed with him, concerning Mamûn and the man who gave him counsel, and concerning Sapor and his vizier, is no work of mine, nor have I done anything more than to alter the words and embellish the narrative. This will I continue to

do, and will describe Sapor's resumption of the government, and how he took Kaisar prisoner, and afterwards liberated him; and so I will conclude the present chapter; but first I will relate a few beautiful and pleasing parables, and will adorn them with those philosophic maxims which are the end and aim of this species of composition.

"I say therefore that, if the old woman of whom the vizier spake had the gift of eloquence, and knew how to compose parables, she might well have answered Ain-Ahlih as follows, when he pretended to have committed no fault. The old woman might have said to him: 'Thus likewise spoke Raïf (the winner in the race) to Arkatt (the spotted), but the latter did not believe him. . . .'"

And here follows the fable which we find in all the MSS., with this difference, that the horse, as in all Indian fables, has a proper name, and that his deliverer, instead of a wild boar, is a spotted panther. The fable is preceded by one or two sayings and proverbs, of one of which the origin is related. At the commencement of the dialogue between the two animals, the author makes the usual protestation that he considers such a miracle by no means impossible, after those of the Lapwing and of the Ant with Solomon, and of the Dog of the Seven Sleepers. (Koran, chap xxvii., v. 20, and xviii., v. 8, 17, 21.)

Into the said fable another is inserted, which I

do not find in the second edition, and which I omit because it only enforces the same moral. The panther relates to the horse (fol. 37 recto) that the proprietor of an extensive enclosure, watered by several canals, and divided into pastures, orchard and pleasure gardens, had a meagre and wasted donkey, which, thanks to the care he took of it, grew and fattened, and was kept in the enclosure, tied by a cord to a stake. One day, when his master was absent, the donkey tore up the stake, and began to scamper about the farm, trampling upon and spoiling everything, until, desiring to pass over the trunk of a tree which had been felled, he made a leap, but falling short, a sharp piece of the wood entered his stomach, causing his bowels to protrude. A crow perceiving him in this condition, came joyfully to take up his post beside him, awaiting his death, and began to remind him of all the faults he had committed. At length the ass expired, and the crow fell upon him, says Ibn Zafer, as does the heir upon the jewels of the inheritance bequeathed to him.

The manner in which the fable of the Horse is related in the first edition, necessarily renders it superfluous for the author to repeat before every maxim of his own, "the author of the book says;" which formula is, however, observed throughout the whole of the Pehlwi narrative transcribed by him, namely, the historical romance of Sapor,

and the fable of Ain-Ahlih, and is succeeded at the end of the interpolated sentence by another, answering to "the narrative continues."

At the conclusion of the fable of the Donkey and the Crow, the first edition resumes :

"The author of the book, may God remit his sins, says: It is possible that the old woman may then have said to Ain-Ahlih," etc. And after a brief dialogue, which we find in another part of the second edition to which I have adhered, she relates the fable of the Gazelle and the Antelope, beginning "whether it be true or false, a wealthy merchant;" and so on as in § vii.

⁷ This proffered requital is only to be found in s.A. 536; but as in the other MSS., the wild boar, in his answer, refuses to accept the horse as a retainer or client, it appears to be merely an accidental omission. As in Europe, in the middle ages, so amongst the Arabs, it was the custom for the weak or the persecuted to seek the protection of those stronger than themselves, of whom they thus became retainers or clients;—the name is preserved in history alone, but the thing itself exists, and will exist, until, to use the language of the Magi, the final triumph of Hormuzd over Ahriman.

⁸ See note 3. The sentence which I translate "absorbed by the world of corruption," is literally "and already the world of corruption had fastened

upon it with its claws, and it (the soul) was turned wholly towards it." Query, whether in the original, which I presume to have been Pehlwi, the "genius" or "principle" of evil may not have been substituted for the Arabic "world?"

⁹ It is thus written in the MSS. s. A. 537 and 539. s. A. 535 says merely "a man of letters."

¹⁰ s. A. 536. The other MSS. say only "the king of Persia," without adding that he was the sole eye of this great nation. It should appear, therefore, that in the second edition Ibn Zafer modified this Oriental paraphrase of the famous speech of Louis XIV., "*L' état, c'est moi.*"

¹¹ Babel is the oriental form of the name which we have converted into Babylon and Babylonia. The traditions concerning the great power of this state, which even achieved the conquest of Persia, probably caused the bestowal of this high-sounding name upon the Persian kingdom conquered by Alexander the Great, which comprised all the territory which had belonged to that of Babylon, and thus we find it designated by many Eastern writers. Moreover, the Persia of the Greeks was not known to its inhabitants either by that name, or by that of Babel, but as Iran. Babylonia, properly so called, corresponds with the Arabic province of Irak, to the south of Mesopotamia or *Geziréh*.

¹² In s. A. 536, this dialogue is prefaced with the customary formula, "And perhaps God, whose

name be praised, granted them the faculty of thought and knowledge, as he did aforetime to the wolf who spoke to Rafi Ibn Omair, of the tribe of Taiï, exhorting him to follow the Apostles of God and to confide in Him: so that Rafi adopted his counsel."

This alludes to one of the miracles related after his death by the companions of Mahomet, who himself never pretended to work miracles. A wolf had captured a goat, which the shepherd rescued from his clutches; and the irritated wolf took up his post upon a sand-hillock, and said in good Arabic, "I took the food which the Lord provided for me; why dost thou take it from me?" And the shepherd marvelling at such a miracle, the wolf resumed: "A far greater miracle is he who dwells at Medina, who can tell the whole of the past and of the future!" After this, the conversion of the shepherd to the faith of Islam could not fail to ensue. See the *Mishcat-ul-Masabih*, vol. ii., p. 719, and p. 760.

"All the MSS. agree in their version of this saying, which might be taken for an extract from the political writings of the present day. "To change the established forms of society," is literally "to change the form of right;" that is, the canons of civil or political right; for such appears to me to be the meaning of *Sewâb*—the "right, the true, and immutable principle." s. A. 535 has "like the deed of those of low estate;" and 537, in place of

“changing the forms,” etc., has “covering with dust the face of right.”

Twice already the lowest ranks had worked their will, occasioning terrific sufferings, at two periods which must have been well known to Ibn Zafer; namely, in the time of the Sassanides, early in the 7th century under the guidance of Mazdak, and in that of the Abbassides, in the 9th and 10th centuries, under the banner of the Kar-matians.

¹⁴ The Arabic word *Nakus* signifies the rattles employed as substitutes for bells, which they are forbidden to use, by the Christians of the East, and which, under the name of “*sacra ligna*,” were likewise employed by them, for the same reason, in the early days of Christianity in Europe, where they are now made use of only on Good Friday. *Nakus* also signifies a bell. I do not think that either were at any time used by the Romans in their camps to mark the watches of the night; and I therefore incline to the belief that the author of this Persian tale transferred into the camp a custom known only in the Christian cities. It is obvious that in this instance the *Nakus* was used to indicate the watches of the night. The besieged were to make ready at the first sound, and to attack the camp at the second, that is, three hours before midnight.

¹⁵ The original has *Torab*, “earth.” But it is doubtless here used in the sense of cement.

¹⁶ The conclusion to this Solwanah, source of comfort, or chapter, is the only one of the kind in the entire work. In none of the MSS. do we find any similar passage at the conclusion of the chapters, i., iii., iv., v.

NOTES TO CHAPTER III.

¹ The word *Sabr*, which forms the title of this chapter, signifies "patience," in its most extended sense, and as it was used by the Latins, including the virtue of endurance or perseverance; *Sabr* likewise signifies *sang-froid*, and would be equally applicable to the warrior who defends himself bravely in the contest, and to the coward who puts his defenceless enemy to death. For want of a better term I have employed "patience" (which is likewise used in the first passage quoted from the Koran) to head this chapter, which, according to the author, treats only of this comprehensive virtue as applied to the conduct of public men. In the course of the chapter I have translated it sometimes "patience" and sometimes "endurance," according to the context.

² Koran, chap. viii., v. 30. The event here recorded by Ibn Zafer was the cause of the Hejira, or Flight of Mahomet; in other words, that of his open rebellion against the social and religious institutions of his time. There is little to

add to our author's account of the occurrence, which is recorded by innumerable Mussulman authors. According to Beidhawi (*Commentary on the Koran*, Arabic original, Leipzig edit., p. 365), the banishment of Mahomet was counselled by Hesham Ibn Amr, his imprisonment by Abû Boh-tori, and his death by Abû Jahl, one of the fiercest opponents of the Prophet. The various MSS. of the Solwân do not agree as to the name of the individual who suggested banishment; for in s. A. 535 we find Oyayna, and in others Otba. The latter is the most probable, as Otba Ibn Rabia is known to have been one of the most determined enemies of Mahomet, but never to have counselled any harsher measure against him than banishment. (See Caussin de Percival, *op. cit.*, vol. i., p. 376, etc.) As to the other Arabic names here mentioned, it is scarcely necessary to inform the reader that "Iblis" signifies the Devil; "Nejid," the elevated region of Central Arabia contiguous to Hejaz; and "Kabila," a tribe, or more properly one of the subdivisions of a tribe. It may not, however, be superfluous to say a few words concerning the position of Mahomet, of his partisans, and of his adversaries, when he was compelled to fly from Mecca on the 18th or 19th of June, 622.

Mahomet was born of the noble house of Hashem, of the tribe of Koreish, merchants, who having, centuries before, usurped the priesthood of the Caaba (the sanctuary of all the Arab tribes,

which attracted a great annual concourse of pilgrims and merchants), had raised so many dwellings around it as to form a city which obtained the name of Mecca. The social institutions were the same as those of all the desert tribes. The elders and heads of the more powerful families regulated conjointly what might be called the foreign affairs of the tribe, and its simple municipal concerns, and, above all, discharged the office of the priesthood, which was, as we have shown, the mainspring of their wealth. The civil authority of this species of aristocracy was, however, limited, and they had no judicial power. Each family administered its own affairs separately, in a simple and patriarchal manner, and the differences that arose between them were settled according to international law ; that is, either by war or treaty. Such was, with slight variations, the condition of all the Arab tribes, with the exception of those of Yemen and Syria, and the dwellers on the banks of the Euphrates. Many virtues mingled with the vices of this primitive state. Inviolability of dwellings, respect of persons, and toleration of opinions, were compulsory amongst so many armed and independent associations, between whom the merest trifle might serve to kindle a bloody war ; even as, at one time, the sanguinary practice of duelling served to restrain the license of European society. A social condition such as this can alone explain the fact of the

Prophet having dwelt unharmed for eleven years in the midst of a sacerdotal oligarchy, while preaching to them a purer form of religion. To this we must, however, add the personal influence he had acquired by the mildness and blamelessness of his manners, his marvellous genius, his eloquence, his daring, moderation, and perseverance which he justly regarded as a cardinal virtue. He had at first to encounter the most dangerous obstacle to all reformers, the derision of his friends; and subsequently the sarcasms, insults, and menaces of his enemies; but for many years the power and influence of the house of Hashem restrained them from putting their threats into execution; so that while his proselytes of low degree, disowned by their families, were abandoned to the vengeance of the mighty, or, if slaves, were cruelly tortured; while eighty Mussulmans fled from their native land to take refuge in Abyssinia; Mahomet himself, though reviled in word and insulted in deed, was yet shielded by his kindred, who rejected his mission, for the sake of the honour of the family. After ten years of endurance, the Prophet determined to ground his scheme upon the tribes dwelling at Medina. He secured some proselytes amongst them, conspired with their chiefs who sought him at Mecca, and obtained from them the confirmation by oath of an agreement constituting him head of a league or association. In this extremity, the grandees of Mecca

resolved on the death of the conspirator. They assembled in the hall of council, in which business was transacted and public ceremonies performed, where they came to the determination recorded by our author; and, acting upon the fundamental principle of all bodies politic, substituted public for private vengeance by deputing one man from every family to execute the sentence. But long-established custom prevailed over infant law, and the officers of justice laid in wait, like assassins, before the house of the Prophet, not daring to cross the threshold, nor to sacrifice their victim while he slept.

* Chap. xxxvi. of the Koran is marked like several others, with some characters of which we do not know the meaning, and is called Y. S. from these two letters. It is recited by Mussulmans *in articulo mortis*, or in moments of great peril, because the Prophet declared himself to have recited it on this occasion, and was wont to designate it as the heart of the Koran.

The anecdote of the dust sprinkled on the heads of the ambushed executioners, is omitted by many writers, but is not on that account the less probable, as to fling a handful of earth against his enemies appears to have been one of the few superstitious or symbolical practices which the Prophet permitted himself, and we read that he thus encouraged his friends, and struck terror into his enemies at the battle of Bedr. It might also

be an ancient custom, since we may trace in it some resemblance to the scriptural injunction given to the disciples, to "shake the dust from their feet," against those who would not receive them.

The cavern to which allusion is here made, is one on Mount Thur, three miles from Mecca, and in the opposite direction to Medina. The Prophet took refuge there with Abû Bekr, while the Koreish aware of his flight, caused the whole country to be scoured, more especially in the direction of Medina. Tradition asserts that their emissaries passed directly in front of the cave, but abstained from entering it on perceiving a dove's nest and a cobweb at its mouth, which had been miraculously placed there to make it appear that no living creature had passed the entrance. After three days, Mahomet and his faithful companion quitted their concealment and rode to Medina.

⁴ These virtues are all masculine in Arabic.

This tradition of the prophet is not to be found in the *Mishcat-ul-Masabih*.

⁵ According to Procopius, the principal temple of fire appears to have been situated in Aderbijan (see note 30 to chap. i.)

⁶ Abû Teman Habib Ibn Aus, of the tribe of Tai, was a poet celebrated for his collection of ancient Arabic poems, entitled *Hamasa*, or war-like virtue, of which the original Arabic, together with long commentaries by Tebrizi and others

and a Latin version, has been published by the learned orientalist Freytag (Bonnæ, 1828). Habib lived at the commencement of the ninth century after Christ, and composed other works likewise. See an admirable article on the *Hamasa* by M. Noël de Vergers, in the *Univers Pittoresque, Arabie*, (Paris, 1847, p. 474); the preface of the *Hamasa* (pars prior, p. ix.), and the biographical dictionary of Haji Khalfa, edit. Flügel (vol. iv., p. 387).

⁷ These two verses of Nashal Ibn Harri, are to be found in the *Hamasa*, (p. 183, of the first part, Arabic text). I have adopted the reading of the *Hamasa*.

⁸ In the first verse I have abandoned the reading of s. A. 535, to adopt that given by all the other MSS., as well as by the *Kitab-el-Aghani*, which have *kibal*, the ligature of the sandal, in place of *ftal*, which I cannot find in any dictionary; but which, in a marginal note to s. A. 535, is stated to mean the opening of the bow, and may probably mean a bow-string. In this case the variation would be, "I was in the midst of them like the bowstring between the two fingers."

I gather from the *Kitab-el-Aghani*, (Paris MS., s. A. 1414, vol. iv., fol. 304 recto), that the name of the poet was Amr Ibn Ijlan Ibn Amir, Ibn Bard (?), Ibn Monabbah, of the house of Kahil and tribe of Hodhail. He was surnamed Du'l Kalb, either because he was always accompanied

by a dog, or because on one occasion that he was going forth to war, he took with him a hound, so that his comrades addressed him as "he of the dog," and the appellation clung to him. One of the versions given of the death of Amr is worthy of record, as proving that the warrior-poet did not bely the sentiments expressed in his verses. Being pursued to the death by the Beni-Fahm on account of a woman of their tribe, after experiencing many vicissitudes, he took refuge in a cave, in which he was discovered by his enemies who called to him to come forth. Amr replied, "That he was content where he was;" and thereupon one of his foes returned, "Sing us, now, those verses, which begin with, 'I found myself in a strait, etc.' " "Behold it here—I am in it," answered Amr, slew the first who attempted to enter and kept the rest at bay, until forcing an entrance through the roof, they slew him within the cave.

⁹ Chosroes I., who reigned over Persia from 531 to 579, would in all ages have merited the surname of the Great. But with the proverbial blindness of courtiers and partisans, those of Persia in the sixth century bestowed upon him that of Anûshirewân, or Nûshirewân, signifying "gentle-spirit." This "gentle spirit" ascended the throne over the corpses of two of his brothers, and afterwards maintained himself upon it by the slaughter of his own son. He inaugurated his reign by the proscription of 80,000 heretics; and though

during his conquests he was wont to bewail the butchery of unarmed citizens, yet he never exerted himself to prevent it.

I have had occasion, in the Introduction, to touch upon the internal administration of Chosroes, which, for those times and those people, was undoubtedly a prodigy of wisdom and justice, and reveals the mind of a great statesman. Such Chosroes showed himself to be in his negotiations with his cotemporary (and, be it said, *his inferior*), Justinian, honoured by us as the impersonation of Roman law, but to whom the Persian monarch might have addressed the words of Harûn-al-Raschid to Asma'i: "You have more learning, but I have greater genius." Chosroes countermined all the political intrigues of Justinian; compelled him to accede to humiliating treaties; confronted at the head of his armies the captains of the un-warlike Roman emperor, defeated them all except Belisarius, and held his ground unvanquished even by the conqueror of Africa and Italy. We have no distinct account of the campaigns of Chosroes, with the exception of those against the Romans, who, although already beginning to degenerate, still maintained their military superiority. It was when Chosroes invaded Syria, destroyed Antioch and took Aleppo and other cities of the coast, (540-573), when he confronted the Romans in Mesopotamia (541, 543, 573); and in the Caucasus (549-556); that he had

to deal with his most formidable enemies, by whom he witnessed the daring invasion of Persia towards the close of his life (579). But the numbers and the ferocity of the nations whom he assaulted on all sides, assuredly conferred no less splendour upon his other victories, which are but vaguely known to us through fragments of Persian chronicles and legends. He made war with success upon the Hephthalites beyond the Oxus, the ancient enemies of Persia; barred the progress of one of those Tartar hordes which history has beheld from time to time, accumulating in masses to overflow China, Europe, and Southern Asia; made himself master of Cabûl, Beloochistân, and several provinces beyond the Indus; and is even said to have undertaken an expedition against Ceylon; and, having driven the Abyssinians from Yemen, exacted tribute from the kings of that portion of Arabia which was soon after incorporated with Persia. (See Mirkond, in Sacy's *Mémoires sur les Antiquités de la Perse*, p. 364, etc.; Reinaud, *Mémoires sur l'Inde*, p. 125, 126; Caussin de Perceval, *Essai sur l'Histoire des Arabes*, vol. i., p. 147, etc., and vol. ii., p. 85; and the Western writers quoted by Le Beau, *Histoire du Bas-Empire*, with St. Martin's notes to the years aforesaid.) Malcolm passes over this period somewhat superficially; and Ibn Badrun adds nothing concerning the conquests of Chosroes, but records many fables, interspersed with a few facts

concerning the public works undertaken by him, and alludes to his diplomatic relations with all the kings of the earth. (See Arabic text, p. 41.) In none of these writers do I find mention of the circumstance of the elephant mentioned by Ibn Zafer.

¹⁰ Mûsa el Hadi, son of Mahadi, and brother of Harûn-al-Raschid, reigned before the latter for the space of fifteen months in the years 169-70 of the Hegira (A.D. 785-6), and died at the age of twenty-two or three, as it was suspected, of poison, administered by his own mother. I find neither in Ibn el Athir, nor in Abulfeda, the instance of prowess related of this caliph in the Solwân : but they do not fail to record the savage zeal with which he persecuted the Kharejite rebels and heretics, and which he inherited from his father, the founder of a species of Mussulman inquisition against them, in the form of a special magistrate, entitled the "Provost of the *Zindik*." *Zindik* became one of those vague appellations so often conferred by hostility or ignorance upon the disciples of the most opposite doctrines; but its literal signification is atheists, or materialists, and in the days of which we speak it was applied to the followers of Mani, and believers in his real or reputed doctrines. (See Introduction, § ix.) The accusations brought against them, a mixture of doubtfully attested facts and exaggerated reports, appear to have resembled those against the Jews and heretics in the middle ages, and Mahadi is said

to have rehearsed them to his son, while causing a Zindik to be slain before his eyes and his corpse to be suspended to the gibbet, at the same time exhorting his heir to continue the persecution. (Ibn el Athir, Paris MS., s. A. 740, No. 1 fol. 39 verso.) The obedient Mûsa, not content with a general massacre of Zindikis at Aleppo, and an *auto-da-fé* of their books, likewise put to death a philosopher and poet, ninety years of age and blind from his birth, who was accused of the heresy of holding fire in higher estimation than earth. (Abulfeda. Annals, ann. 163 and 166, with Reiske's Note, No. 52, vol. ii., p. 640: also Ibn el Athir for the same years.) It appears that Mûsa el Hadi was about to proclaim a persecution on a still more extensive scale, when he fell a victim to a *camarilla* of those days. (Ibn el Athir, *loc. cit.* 170.) The Kharejite, or rebel mentioned by Ibn Zafer may therefore have been some victim of fanaticism whom he designed to interrogate in person, thus enjoying the sweets of persecution before causing him to be put to death.

¹¹ We have no further information concerning this enterprise of Chosroes Anûshirewân than that recorded in n. 9, namely, that he conquered Cabûl and several provinces beyond the Indus. It is therefore impossible to divine the name of the country to which Ibn Zafer alludes; but that which he relates of its beauty and fertility, of the disposition of its inhabitants, who were of Indian

race, and of the worship of fire there observed together with other forms of religion, (see note 39,) would apply to some one of the petty principalities into which Cabûl was divided in the fifth century, or perhaps to one on the eastern banks of the Indus near Moulân, or even Moulân itself. We have one etymological indication which might serve, upon further research, to throw some light upon the subject. Ibn Zafer gives to the sovereign of the country the title of *Arhon*, or *Arkan*, and in the plural *arakinah*, a form frequently used for the plural of substantives for the most part of foreign derivation. This word is not to be found in the Arabic dictionaries, but we know that it exists in the sacred book of the Guebres, entitled the *Dessatir*, and written in a language analogous to Zend. (See de Hammer, *Journ. Asiat.* 1833, p. 25.) Hence it is evident that Ibn Zafer took this word without translating it from the original Persian narrative, and that it is not derived, as might otherwise be supposed, from the Arabic root *rahana*. I leave it to those learned in the languages of India to determine whether this title be derived directly from the Sanscrit, or whether it may have passed into the regions watered by the Indus, together with the Zend language; or lastly, whether it were brought back to those regions in the train of Grecian civilisation, and is to be regarded as a transcription of *Ἀρχον*. The question appears

the more doubtful, that on the one hand the antiquity of the *Dessatir* is not very satisfactorily proved, and on the other, we still find traces of the use of the Greek language in the Affghan provinces : amongst others, some coins with Greek inscriptions, dating from the earliest period of the Christian era.

At any rate, neither the country nor its conquest can be regarded as imaginary. The author himself acknowledges, in his MS., s. A. 536, that the narrative was derived from other sources, saying : “ A fact is related, of which the sense is as follows, the words however being those of the author of the present work,” etc.

The sentences marked with the usual formula : “ it is said, ” are always followed by “ the narrative continues ; ” thus proving that they did not form part of the original history re-produced by Ibn Zafer ; and, moreover, the machinations of Chosroes, the counsels of the Indian prince, the conquest, and the rising of the natives against the invaders, are recorded with such minuteness of detail, and follow upon each other in so natural a manner, as to leave no doubt of their authenticity.

¹² The word which I have here translated as *desire*, is derived from the verb *tama*, to long for, to desire eagerly. It is especially used by Arab writers to denote the tendency to appropriate things easy of acquisition, or covetousness springing from opportunity.

¹³ The word that I here translate, *prince*, is Archon, or Arkan (see note 11).

¹⁴ The original expression is *Bizz*, which resembles byssus, and is used in a general sense for splendid garments.

¹⁵ I here adopt the reading of s. A. 536. Both in the first and second editions, these two last maxims are unaccompanied by the usual formula, "it was said," and manifestly form part of the Pehlwi original.

¹⁶ That which I have translated as *measure*, was a kind of weight or measure used throughout the whole of the East, under the various appellations of *Manna*, *Maund*, *Mon*, *Mun*, &c., and varying in different places from one to a hundred or more pounds.

¹⁷ According to s. A., 535, *Zeberged*, a topaz, or chrysolite. In s. A. 536, we find *Zomorrod-bahri*, literally a sea-emerald.

¹⁸ An oriental weight, varying no less than the *Manna* of which it is a subdivision. At Gidda, in Arabia, there are five *ratl* to the *Manna*.

¹⁹ *Maha*, or *Muha*, is the plural of *Mohah*, a crystal, or beryl. A word derived from the same root signifies small pearls. The translation is literal, the words "cone of light" being alone added.

²⁰ *Faridah* pearls; literally, solitary, that is, costly pearls. Properly the large pearls which alternate with small ones in a necklace.

²¹ *Summons*, or call, would be the literal interpretation of the word used, and which is very common in Mussulman history, where it signifies proclamation,—religious or political *propaganda*.

²² Literally, “because they were in prosperity a gathered harvest, and in war naked swords.” The form of the sentence savours strongly of the spirit of oriental despotism, which regarded the people as existing solely for the profit of the sovereign.

²³ S. A. 536, instead of “with every thing needful,” has, “with various pretexts;” namely, for entering the enemy’s country.

²⁴ See note 11, to Chap. 11., for the real name of the ancient kingdom of Persia.

The Persian chroniclers ascribe to Chosroes Anûshirewán the division of Persia into four great provinces, viz. : 1, Khorassan, Segistan, and Ker-man, to the East of the then kingdom of Persia; 2, Ispahan, Kom, Ghilan, Aderbijan, and Armenia, to the North; 3, Fars and Ahwaz to the South; 4, Irak, with all the territory extending as far as the confines of the Roman Empire, to the West. These provinces corresponded pretty accurately with the Bactriana, Media, Persia, and Assyria of the ancients.

²⁵ This sentence is to be found only in S. A. 536. It was doubtless either the authority or the fear of the censorship which caused it to be omitted in the second edition.

²⁶ I here follow the reading of s. A. 536, to avoid needless repetition.

²⁷ Literally: "ignorance of the places where falls the *Séwab*." For this word, see note 13 to chap. 11; the meaning would, therefore, be as I have given it. s. A. 536, substitutes "Sirab" or mirage.

²⁸ The important passage which follows is to be found only in s. A. 536. s. A. 535, substitutes for it these few words: "Moreover, when the enemy shall know that we contend together amongst ourselves and destroy each other, he will cast aside all fear of us; and his hopes of reducing us to submission will wax in strength."

²⁹ s. A. 536, places this tale in the mouth of the author himself, and not of the vizier, who simply advises the king to retire to the fortress; after which, the first edition continues:—"The author of the book says: Before proceeding with this narrative, I think it well to relate a parable which may, I hope, be approved, both for the moral which it contains, and for the pleasantness of its form. I say, therefore, that perhaps there may have existed two ants, male and female, of whom the male was named Normail," &c. Thus, instead of rats, we have two ants, who leave their ant-hill because it was too near the high road. The remainder of the story is the same, except that they meet with a *dhabb* (land crocodile), who enacts the part of philosopher, instead of the yarbù or gerboa.

This is an animal of the *genus dipus*, which natu-

ralists are now agreed to distinguish from the *mus*. The *dipus gerbo*, or gerboa, is a variety marked by the length of its hind feet and its powers of leaping, and which burrows very deep. The Orientals, though without much knowledge of natural history, appear to have drawn a marked distinction between the *yarbù*, or gerboa, and the rat species; and, in fact, our author represents the *yarbù* as saying, that he shares the instinct of burrowing in common with the rat, while he specifies no other resemblance. This animal has been known in Europe as the Egyptian rat, Pharaoh's rat, &c. (See Niebuhr, *Descript. de l'Arabie*, vol. I., p. 234).

³⁰ "Neither the thing itself, nor any trace of it," is an Arabic saying, quoted in note 17 to chap. I.

³¹ This proverb may be found in Freytag's *Proverbia Arabum* (Bonnae, 1834-43, vol. ii. p. 271), although the form of the second part of it is slightly different. It impossible to translate literally this saying, in which the verb *katala* is employed the first time in the usual sense of to slay—the second in that of, to abase, to overcome.

All the MSS. except s. A. 536 give the second part of this proverb only.

³² Literally: "in safety and with refreshed eyes." "To refresh the eye" is a phrase commonly used in Arabic for "to give pleasure;" and to those accustomed to travel over glaring and sandy deserts under a tropical sun, the expression is full of meaning. Some Arabic philologists, however,

finding this interpretation too simple, add, that tears of sorrow scorch, while those of joy refresh the eye.

The first edition concludes the fable of the ant and the *dhabb* with these same words, and then continues:—"The author of the book says: Having brought my parable to the conclusion which I proposed to myself, I continue the course of the narrative: 'It is said that the Indian Prince,' " etc. In the said narrative I find a variation of a few occasional sentences, which I have not thought worthy of insertion. In s. A. 536, the present chapter contains, in addition, a dialogue between a Bedouin Arab and the Caliph Soliman Ibn Abd al Malik; and two other anecdotes of the same Soliman and Harûn-al-Raschid.

³³ The word here used, signifies stars in general. The term planets exists in Arabic, but as a scientific term rarely employed.

³⁴ This expression is found in the Koran, chap. xxi., v. 104; commentators are not agreed as to its meaning. I have adopted the interpretation of M. de Sacy (*Chrestomathie Arabe*, edit. 2, vol. iii., p. 232.) According to Beidhawr (Commentary on the Koran, Arabic text, Leipsic, p. 624), "Sijil is an angel who, as fast as they are brought to him, rolls up the leaves on which are inscribed the actions of men." According to others, he is the angel who records the actions of every man at his death.

³⁵ s. A. 536, has, "Strange that a man should stoop to listen to his enemy, when he has no hope of obtaining anything from him."

³⁶ From here to note 38, I follow s. A. 536. These profound reflections of a statesman are wanting in all the other MSS., and must have given great offence in the East.

³⁷ I have translated, at a venture, as "taxes on provisions," the Arabic *muna* corresponding with the Latin *annona*. In the present case it might mean a provision for the sustenance of the people, the price of victuals, or a tax upon corn, but it is impossible to decide this point with any certainty, in our ignorance of the period and nation to which this maxim is to be referred.

The word *statute-labour* or *personal service*, is familiar to us in the records of the middle ages. Ibn Zafer may have spoken of it, as having himself beheld it in a country subjected to the feudal system—or, perhaps, the more ancient author, to whom the saying may be ascribed, might have seen instances of it in the East, under the rule of the Mussulmans or Sassanides.

³⁸ Here ends the extract from s. A. 536. Instead of these reflections, worthy of Tacitus or Machiavel, the other MSS. have: "It is said, after their tongues subjects will move their hands; and when they are able to speak, they are also able to rebel," thus substituting a recommendation to stop the mouths of the people by severity, for an

admonition to govern with mildness and justice.

³⁹ Such is the reading of all the MSS., except s. A. 535, which gives "elected by a portion of the people of the capital;" and s. A. 536, which ascribes the election to the chief priest of the Magi. "When the chief priest of the Magi went forth to follow the king, the people of the capital had entreated him to leave them a vicar in his stead; and he had accordingly appointed to this office, a man of an austere and religious life, and very acceptable to the citizens." The version of s. A. 535, would afford another evidence of the promiscuous mixture of creeds in the provinces on the upper Indus, which according to a Chinese traveller of the fifth century, were divided between Brahminism, Buddhism, and the worship of fire. (See note 34 to chap. 1.)

⁴⁰ Ardshir, son of Babek, and founder of the dynasty of the Sassanides, after having restored to Persia, nationality, unity, religion, and military glory, and compiled a code of laws, endeavoured to secure to it a succession of virtuous sovereigns, by means of the famous political testament here alluded to. Of this, several fragments have been preserved to us, which escaped the fanatical zeal of the first Mussulmans, and were carefully collected by the learned Arabs who succeeded the conquerors, and by the Persian poet Ferdosi, who flourished at the commence-

ment of the eleventh century. The whole of the Testament was well known in Persia, as we learn from the *Modjmel al-Tewarikh*, (trans. by M. Mohl, *Journal Asiatique*, 3me série, vol. xii., p. 502). The fragments thus preserved were recopied by Ibn Badrun, Mirkond, and other Persian compilers. A portion taken from Ferdosi is given by Malcolm (*History of Persia*, vol. i., chap. vi., p. 95-6): and from the work of Ibn Badrun, published by Dr. Dozy, we learn that the admonitions of the monarch were addressed not only to his successor, but also to the magistrates, the priesthood, the military, and the peasantry; in short, to all the recognised classes of the community. He enjoined amity, concord, hospitality, and the contraction of marriages between relations, in order to the preservation of the distinctions of class; lastly, he added a counsel against too close an attachment to material interests (Arabic text, p. 47).

⁴¹ Othman Ibn Affan, the third Caliph, reigned from the year 24 to 35 of the Hegira (A.D. 644—655), and died the victim of a rebellion, provoked by the badness of his government—tinctured with favouritism and private hostility, pride, and weakness—and which was equally repugnant to the principles of Islam, to the nature of a free and conquering people, and to the example afforded by the two first Caliphs, Abu Bekr and Omar. Indignant at the conduct of the decrepit Caliph

and his council, the Mussulman warriors flocked to Medina, from the most distant provinces, in order to bring him to reason. They were at first received with insult, then cajoled, and lastly betrayed by the court; but becoming in time aware of the plot, they surrounded the palace of the Caliph, who had no friends to whom to appeal, and having hesitated for several days to violate the sanctity of his dwelling, finally broke into it and slew the now deserted tyrant. The anecdote recorded by Ibn Zafer does not exist in Abulfeda, in the other printed chronicles, or in the works of Ibn Badrun.

⁴² *Ansari*, auxiliaries; a title bestowed on the Mussulmans of Medina, in honour of the efficient aid afforded by them to the Prophet.

⁴³ Yezdejird II., son of Bahram Gour, succeeded his father in the year 441, and died in 458, leaving two sons, Hormuz and Firûz, of whom mention has been already made. The meagre records of Persian history, which speak favourably of this monarch, make no mention of the revolutions alluded to in the passage transcribed by our author. I say transcribed, because we find the same passage in Ibn Badrun, with even less variation than is usually to be met with in different MS. copies of the same work (Arabic text, p. 39-40).

NOTES TO CHAPTER IV.

¹ This is one of the conditions of beatitude in Paradise. The Mussulmans are in the habit of adding, "May God be well pleased with him." After the names of those whom they believe to be numbered amongst the blessed, such as the companions of the Prophet, s. A. 536, adds a comment which it is needless to insert.

² The meaning of the Prophet is, that to be contented and resigned, is more meritorious than to have fought against the infidels.

The battle of Bedr, the first fought for the faith of Islam, was gained by Mahomet on the 16th of Ramadhan, of the year 2 (18th January, 624). Bedr was a village between Mecca and Medina.

Hodaibia is the name of a hill on the confines of the territory of Mecca. Mahomet pitched his camp there in the year 6, and received from his followers, while preparing themselves for combat, the oath of allegiance known as the Oath of the Tree, because the Prophet had stationed himself

beneath an acacia. Instead of joining battle, however, a truce was concluded for ten years, which was the first treaty entered into between the aristocracy of Mecca and the rebel citizen thus acknowledged as the head of an independent association.

* It is well known that Omar Ibn Khattab, converted at the moment that he was about to put Mahomet to death, became, from that day forward, the most formidable of all the apostles of the new faith, for he had the heart of a lion, and his sword was ever unsheathed. After the death of Mahomet and Abû Bekr, he succeeded to the throne of the Caliphs, and the first words that he addressed to the people, were : “ Be it known to you that none among you shall be more powerful in my eyes than the lowest of you all, if he be commended for justice ; and none weaker than the chiefest amongst you, if he desire that which is unjust.” And these were no idle words ; for history perhaps affords no other instance of a prince uniting, in an equal degree, strength of character, ability, uprightness, justice, beneficence, and strictness of rule, tempered by humility. Under his Caliphate the Arabs completed the conquest of Syria, begun under Abû Bekr, and achieved that of Persia and Egypt as far as the confines of Lybia.

Abû Mûsa el Asha’ri was governor of Basra under Omar. He had combated under Mahomet, who regarded him as one of his most trusty cap-

tains, and charged him with several important missions.

⁴ Abû Derdâ, a powerful citizen of Medina, who had a reputation for profound legal learning. It was not until he saw Mahomet at Medina, and found that the new faith was gaining ground, that he determined to adopt it.

⁵ Sa'd Ibn Abi Wakkas, a cousin of the Prophet, a skilful archer and afterwards a distinguished captain, shared in all Mahomet's battles, and defended him valiantly in that of Ohod, when the Prophet escaped with great difficulty, and severely wounded, from the hands of his enemies. Sa'd subsequently overthrew the dynasty of the Sassanides at the battle of Kadesia, a city of Irak or Babylonia, situated upon one of the branches of the Euphrates. This battle was maintained with great fury for three days in the month Moharrem, of the year 15 (February and March, 636); and although Sa'd was too ill to mount his horse, to him appertains the honour of the victory, secured by the discipline of the army, the choice of the ground intersected with ditches and water-courses, and the disposal of his forces, by which means he achieved, with 30,000 men, the total defeat of the Persian host, numbering, it is said, 120,000 combatants, though this amount may be exaggerated, with 33 elephants, and all the material advantages appertaining to a powerful and wealthy monarchy, the rival of the Roman empire. Sa'd also

contributed, by his strategic manœuvres, to the conquest of Syria. (See Caussin de Perceval, *Essai sur l'Hist. des Arabes*, vol. iii. p. 467, etc.)

⁶ The author here makes a play upon the active and passive voices of the verb; a species of literary pedantry which was much in vogue amongst Arab writers, and which considerably obscures the meaning of the sentence, viz., that "it is better to content oneself of his own accord, than to be compelled to do so." It is worthy of note that Ibn Badrun attributes a part of the preceding sentence to the famous Buzur-gi-mihr, the vizier of Chosroes Anûshirewân, or Chosroes Parwiz. This vizier, having been put to death for abandoning the religion of the Magi to become a Christian, Ibn Badrun says (Arabic text, p. 45), "A book was found in his own handwriting, in which, amongst other things, was inscribed: Since destiny is inevitable, covetousness is folly; since deceit is a feature of human nature, it is weakness to trust in every one; since death is impending over all, it is madness to repose upon worldly advantages." Thus both in narrative, sentiment, and expression, Ibn Zafer is constantly recurring to the Pehlwi literature, and to the period of Chosroes Anûshirewân.

⁷ Mention has been made of Hassan al Basri in note 9 to chap. i. in the life of Hajjaj Ibn Yûsuf. He was born at Medina in the year 21 (A.D. 642), and died in 110 (728), at Bassora, where he had

taken up his abode. He was a man of lofty genius, learning, and piety, and a theologian of the school which believed in absolute predestination.

⁸ Two more verses follow which it is needless to translate, because their whole merit consists in a play upon the syllable *jal*, which, in combination with other syllables, may be made to express four different meanings. Their substance is, "Fear and revere God, and be content with His decrees, for they are immutable."

⁹ Yezdejird I., like Dionysius, spoke as a philosopher and acted as a tyrant, thereby obtaining from the Persians the surname of *Ferdikiar*, "rich in sins," and from the Arabs that of *El-Athim*, which has nearly the same meaning. He reigned from A.D. 399 to 420. The information which we collect from other sources concerning the facts recorded by Ibn Zafer is as follows:—

Yezdejird had the misfortune of losing all his children almost as soon as they were born; for, says Mirkond, their lives were as brief as that of a rose. Hence, on the birth of Bahram (A.D. 400), who appeared more robust than the rest, his father anxiously consulted the astrologers concerning the destiny of the infant, and the manner in which he should be brought up. They predicted that he would be great, fortunate, valiant, wise, and eloquent, and that he would succeed his father upon the throne, but that he must be reared

in a foreign land. Yezdejird therefore, after mature deliberation as to which country might best suit the health of Bahram, decided in favour of the state of Hira, in Irak, which was governed by his vassal No'man. He summoned this tributary king to his court, and entrusted the infant to him; and No'man caused him, according to Ibn el-Athir quoted by Mirkond, to be brought up in a subterranean abode by three nurses selected from the noblest families of Persia and Arabia; all three healthful and robust, of virtuous conduct, and of intelligent minds. No'man then summoned learned and expert persons from all quarters to instruct Bahram in learning, in the customs of different nations, in horsemanship, and in the use of arms. The result of this education was that he soon manifested remarkable quickness of intellect, and a great predilection for the chase, as well as for music, feasting, and pleasure.

The Persian compiler goes on to say that this people, at length becoming weary of the tyranny of Yezdejird, began to put up prayers for his death, in consequence of which Providence delivered them from him, by sending an unbroken horse, which killed him with a kick, A.D. 420. Dreading lest the son of such a father, who had, moreover, been brought up in a strange land, should govern as ill, or even worse than himself, the Lords of Persia raised to the throne a descendant of Ardshir. whose name was Chosroes.

Bahram, however, advanced to reconquer his kingdom in company with Mondir who had succeeded to No'man, at the head of an army of 30,000 horse, and preceded by a vanguard of 10,000 more under the command of No'man the son of the king. They encamped against Madain (Ctesiphon), and agreed with the Persians to appeal to the judgment of God, as related by Ibn Zafer. The translation of M. de Sacy here states that the two famished lions, who were to defend the crown, were produced by Bostan, the captain of the army of Persia, and Chosroes having declined the trial, Bahram sprang upon the back of one of the lions, struck him on the head with a stone, and seizing the other by the ears, knocked their heads together, until he dashed out the brains of both; on beholding which miraculous feat the Persians proclaimed him king by acclamation.

Lastly, Mirkond states that Bahram obtained the surname of Gour, or the wild ass, for having, when out hunting, slain at one blow both a wild ass and a lion, by which he was attacked. He adds that his reign was marked by acts of justice and liberality; that he performed prodigies of valour against the Khan of China, or of the Turks; and still more remarkable feats on a journey into India, where he slew a monstrous elephant; and that he met his death out hunting (A.D. 447), by plunging with his horse into a deep pool. (Sacy *Mem. sur les Antiquités de la Perse*, pp. 321-41.) The statement

of Malcolm, derived from other Persian compilations, differs but little from this. He adds that "the accident happened in a fine valley between Shiraz and Isfahan, which is to this day called the Vale of Heroes, from being (on account of fine pasture and abundance of game) the favourite resort, from the earliest ages, of the kings and nobles of Persia. The whole of this valley abounds in springs, some of which are very large and of great depth; their sources under ground are supposed to communicate. It is not surprising therefore, that the body of Bahram was never found, though every search was made by his inconsolable mother." Of this Colonel Malcolm obtained a painful proof, when, in 1810, he visited this valley, where he saw the ruins of Bahram's hunting seats, and learnt many traditions concerning him. He relates that, being encamped near the springs into one of which Bahram had plunged, a soldier of his escort, although a good swimmer, was drowned in bathing in the fountain, the same it was said in which the Persian king lost his life. (*Malcolm's History of Persia*, vol. i., p. 119-22.) So constantly is truth mingled with fiction in the history of the Sassanides!

This narrative which I have taken without much abbreviation from Mirkond, serves to prove the accuracy of Ibn Zafer; who, notwithstanding the addition or omission of a few particulars, differs from him only as to the name of the capital of

Persia, which according to him was Jundi-Shahpûr, and according to Mirkond, Madain. Moreover, we find in other writers the facts which Mirkond passes over slightly or in silence. Ibn Badrun relates the anecdote concerning the death of Yezdejird to the same effect as does Ibn Zafer; showing that they both compiled from the same sources; and an extract from Tabari inserted in a note by the learned editor of Ibn Badrun, (Arabic text edited by Dr. R. Dozy, Leyden, 1846; p. 37 of the Arabic, p. 114 of the notes,) gives the same version in greater detail. The discontent of Bahram at the court of his father, the permission obtained for him by a Roman ambassador to return to Hira, the clemency which he manifested on ascending the throne, and his liberality and gratitude towards the king of Hira, are narrated, as by Ibn Zafer, so also by Tabari, Ibn Khaldun, and the other Eastern authors, followed by d'Ohsson, (*Tabl. Hist. de l'Orient*, vol. ii., p. 225-6); and we learn both from Masudi and Ibn Badrun, that Bahram was so perfect a master of the Arabic language, as to have been able to compose several poems in it, fragments of which are still extant. (Ibn Badrun, *loc. cit.*, Caussin de Perceval, *Essai sur l'Hist. des Arabes*, vol. ii., pp. 59, 60.)

Lastly, we learn from the Armenian writers studied by St. Martin, that the Chosroes, who was raised to the throne on the death of Yezdejird, was

a son of Ardshir II., who bequeathed the kingdom to Sapor III., son of Du-'l-Aktaf; and that another son of Yezdejird, who was governor of Armenia, hastened to take possession of the vacant throne, but had no sooner reached Ctesiphon, than he was poisoned. Bahram Gour, learning caution from the fate of his brother, then came with Mondir and his 40,000 Arabs to enforce his claim to the heritage of his father. (See St. Martin, notes; *Le Beau, Hist. du Bas-Empire*, vol. v., p. 485, book xxx., § 39.)

By no writer do I find mention made of Hils.

¹⁰ The fragment that begins here, and ends at note 12, is to be found only in the first edition. This open expression of disbelief in astrology, could not have failed in those days to excite the alarm of the censorship. But Ibn Zafer, while he derided astrology, believed in necromancy, with that inconsistency so inherent in human nature that neither science nor civilisation have hitherto succeeded in eradicating it.

¹¹ They were designated as Jin by the Arabs, according to whom, falling stars were no other than these Jin detected in the act of eaves-dropping at the portals of heaven by the angels, and hurled back by them into the abyss.

¹² This passage, which shows the Arabs of the twelfth century to have been far advanced in the art of learned criticism, has been very literally translated; and as the MS. is of the same century,

there can be no question of interpolation by the copyist.

The words which I have rendered indifferently, as astronomy and astrology, are the same in Arabic, and signify both the science itself, and the abuse of it. The sentence which I have rendered "revolutions which recur," is literally, "returns which proceed."

¹³ The small kingdom of Hira was founded in the second century after Christ, by a colony of Arabs, congregated from all parts of the Peninsula, who sought safety and prosperity in the fertile country enclosed between the Euphrates and the Tigris before their confluence, and which is now known as Irak Arabi, and nearly corresponds with the Chaldea and Babylonia of the ancients. These colonists took up their abode in two principal cities, Anbar to the north, the Pirsaporas (Firuz-Shahpûr) of the Romans, and Hira, called by them Hirta, situated but little above the present Cufa. The new state appears to have been from the first a dependency of Persia, by which it was bounded on the north and east, and to have enfranchised itself in some degree during the anarchy that prevailed in the time of the Arsacides; but Ardshir, son of Babek, founder of the dynasty of the Sassanides, and restorer of the ancient power and unity of Persia, speedily reduced the petty princes of Hira to submission. The Sassanides afterwards made use of them as a

rallying point for the Arab tribes of Mesopotamia, who sided with the Persians against the Romans. Thus, the kingdom of Hira was involved in all the wars of the Persians against the Roman Empire, and the Arabs of Syria and Mesopotamia destroyed each other to gratify their own passions, and serve the interests of these rival empires—like the Italians of the middle ages in the struggle between the two great powers, enthroned, the one beyond the Alps, the other beyond the limits of earth.

To return to Hira. On the expiration of a dynasty which reigned less than a century, the government fell (A. D., 268) into the hands of one Amr Ibn Adi, Ibn Rabia, Ibn Nasr, a descendant of Lakhm, founder of a tribe in Yemen. No'man I., called the One-Eyed, or the Elder, he of whom Ibn Zafer speaks, was the son of Imrulkais II., and fifth sovereign of the Nasrite or Lakhmite dynasty, so that Adi and Nasr, who would seem from his style as given by Ibn Zafer, to be his grandfather and great-grandfather, were in fact much more remote ancestors ; but it was the custom of the Arabs, passing over the intervening links, to connect the name of the individual by the word *Ibn* (son) with those of the founders of his race.

No'man I. reigned from 390 to 418, and appears to have been the first prince who sought to raise the kingdom of Hira to higher destinies, to which however it never attained. He established a

standing army, which enabled him to reduce to submission, or at any rate to rally round himself all the Arabs of Irak, and of a part of Mesopotamia. With his sword he acquired wealth in his expeditions against the tribes allied to the Romans, and wealth served to increase his power to such an extent, that two years after his death, or abdication, (*viz.* in 420) his son, Mondir I., was enabled to march against Ctesiphon with 40,000 Arabs, in order to place Bahram Gour upon the throne, contrary to the wish of the greater part of the Persian nation. This last is an undoubted fact, whence we may conclude that the numbers of the Arab host are not exaggerated, and consequently that Mondir, or rather his father, had acquired a species of supremacy over the tribes of Central Arabia and the Persian gulf, which at this period showed but little submission to the authority of the monarchs of Yemen.

The ill-gotten riches of No'man I., added greatly to the prosperity of the city of Hira. In its environs he erected the two palaces of Sedir and Khawarnak; this last, according to the chroniclers, when he was entrusted with the education of Bahram Gour: agriculture appears likewise to have made considerable progress under No'man. It is needless to quote the marvels recorded by eastern writers concerning the palace or castle of Khawarnak, or to relate the fate of the Greek or Roman architect Sinimmar, who was precipitated

from its summit by command of No'man, for saying that he could destroy the castle even as he had built it, or in some other way exciting the ready anger of the king; more essential is it to relate here what we learn from other sources concerning the conversion and abdication of this remarkable prince, recorded by our author, in chapter v., § vii.

There appears no room to doubt the inclination of No'man towards Christianity, which had been gradually gaining ground in Hira ever since the end of the third, or beginning of the fourth century, so that at the end of the latter a great part of the population had become Christian, and already demanded churches, a bishop, and the free exercise of their religion. If we might trust a monastic legend, we might conclude that, shortly before his abdication or death, No'man thought to derive a political advantage from the new faith, by allying himself with Rome to throw off the yoke of Persia, and perhaps to attempt the union of a great part of the Arabic race. According to tradition, No'man had, from motives of state policy, forbidden his subjects to seek the benefit of the counsels and miracles of St. Simeon Stylites, who in 410 had retired to the summit of a mountain in Syria, whither great crowds were attracted by the singular penance from which he derived his surname. Simeon however, without quitting his column, avenged himself upon the sovereign of Hira. He appeared to him in a dream, accom-

panied by two robust satellites, whom he caused to break his bones with very real and tangible blows, and refused to heal him until he had countermanded the prohibition to his subjects to enter Syria, and had publicly sanctioned the Christian form of worship. All this, continues the legend, was related by the king himself to a Roman general in Syria, by name Antiochus, whom he went to visit during a time when they banqueted together, and No'man declared to the Roman that he would himself become a Christian, but for the fear of the king of Persia. It is plain that if we reject every part of this tradition, except that which falls within the domain of history, namely, the interview with Antiochus, this would suffice to account for the public conversion of No'man which would be perfectly consonant with his political interests and his ambition.

A Mussulman statement, derived probably from the ancient records of the kings of Hira, gives a different version of this event. According to it, No'man was one day contemplating the surrounding country from the lofty towers of Khawrnak, when suddenly his delight in the scene which he beheld was changed to religious melancholy, and, renouncing the blessings which he could enjoy only for a time, he resolved to seek for such as would last him throughout eternity in another life. The chroniclers add, that on the following night, No'man abdicated the throne, and clothing himself

in sackcloth, went forth as a pilgrim, and disappeared from the eyes of all. There is assuredly nothing in this tradition inconsistent with human nature. More than one similar instance is recorded in history, nor is there need of any miraculous intervention of Heaven to explain it. But, on the other hand, admitting the facts of the interview between No'man and Antiochus, and of the sudden favour shown by the latter to the Christians, at the very moment when Yezdejird, who had hitherto exhibited an exemplary degree of toleration, began to persecute them; and, viewing them in combination with the Mussulman tradition; it would not be unnatural to suppose that No'man was compelled to abdicate by the court of Ctesiphon, or that his ostensible pilgrimage was but a cloak to conceal some dark misdeed of Yezdejird, who was not overburdened with scruples of conscience, and had no lack of agents and partisans in Hira. The uncertainty of the narrative, and the introduction on the scene of Adi Ibn Zeid, who lived two centuries after No'man, would tend to favour such a supposition.

See concerning the facts of the case, Hamza of Ispahan. (Petersburg edition, pp. 102 - 3 and the other authorities quoted by Caussin de Perceval, *Essai sur l'Hist. des Arabes*, etc., vol. ii., p. 35, etc., and 54, etc.)

No'man was succeeded A. D. 418, by his son Mondir I., who in 420 invaded Persia with

Bahram Gour, in company with his son, afterwards No'man II.

¹⁴ MS. s. A. 535, has No'man Ibn Mondir, in place of his grandfather No'man I. (See note 33 to chapter v.)

¹⁵ The sounding title of King of the Arabs, here signifies nothing more than the chief of the nomadic tribes of Mesopotamia, and of the confines of Hira, including at the utmost, as I suppose, a few additional tribes of Bahrein and the Nejd.

If the coronation of No'man I., and the authority given him by the King of Persia over the Arab tribes beyond the limits of Hira, be considered historical, it must have taken place A. D. 400, since Yezdejird died in 420, and Bahram, who appears to have succeeded to the throne of Persia the same year, was, according to Ibn Badrun, (*op. cit.* p. 37) twenty years old when he began to reign.

¹⁶ It is not improbable that four women of noble birth might have been provided as nurses, though not all wet-nurses, to the royal infant, and that he might have remained four years under their care. It was a very ancient custom in the east to put children out to nurse among the Bedouin tribes. Mahomet, as is well known, was reared in the Desert; and, even in our own times, according to Burckhardt, the sheriffs of Mecca follow the same custom, and cause their children to remain many years amongst the nomadic tribes to learn their

language, and acquire strength both of mind and body. I say to learn their language, for the Desert has been at all times the Tuscany of Arabia; and in the palmy days of the Mussulman domination, the noble Saracens, even of Spain and Africa, used to send their sons to travel in the Desert in order to complete their education by the study of the language and the heroic traditions of their forefathers.

¹⁷ I have here used the word *chiefs*, as I did a few pages back, in speaking of the persons who accompanied No'man to the court of Ctesiphon, but the author then made use of the plural of the substantive *rais*, derived from *ras*, a head; whereas, here he employs the plural of *zai'm*, of which the literal meaning is "one who speaks for the rest," and therefore a representative, one invested with authority. This term is explained by the constitution of the Arab tribes, which formed so many separate associations for mutual insurance in case of fines imposed as penalties for crime, and he who was the representative of the association in the eyes of other similar ones, would naturally be the leader of the tribe in war, when, instead of compounding for an offence, an appeal was made to arms. The two offices were by their nature united, and if occasionally the civil and military authority were vested in different persons, these cases were exceptional. This solitary magistrate of a Bedouin tribe was known by various appella-

tions, according to the differences of dialect or custom, such as *zai'm sheik* (elder), *said* or *sid* (lord), *kayl dû*, and others, and perhaps, in a more general sense, *rais*, as we should say chief or head.

Amongst the Arab burghers, and especially those of the colonies scattered abroad by conquest, *za'im* appears to have been equivalent to a Mussulman feudatory, that is one who owned an extensive territory by hereditary right, and exercised the authority of a chief over the peasants attached to his estate. (See note to Ibn Jobair's journey into Sicily, *Journal Asiatique*, vol. vii. 1846, note 76.)

¹⁸ I have given a literal translation of this title of office, which the author further on explains, by the mouth of Hils, the philosopher. The courts of despotic sovereigns have not usually been models of decorum, and although abstinence from wine was a principle of education amongst the Arabs, afterwards enforced by Mahomet, as a religious precept, yet, when once luxury had invaded the court of the caliphs, both they and all the other princes, between whom the Mussulman empire was afterwards divided, were wont openly and shamelessly to pass their time in drinking, and in the society of boon companions. And the abuse grew to such a pitch, that the Arabic word most commonly used for a courtier or associate of the prince, was drinking companion, or, in Latin, *compotator*.

¹⁹ The various MSS. are all defective in this passage, and all differ. I have been obliged to rectify them by each other as best I might: to the sentence beginning "dissimulation is," etc. s.A. 536 prefixes "the author of the book says."

²⁰ "The First and the Last," or "the Beginning and End of all things," is one of the titles of the Deity in use amongst the Mussulmans, and we find it in s.A. 536. Ibn Zafer, who often makes use of foreign appellations, here employs this one, although treating of a period anterior to Mahomet, inasmuch as the Prophet declared his to have been the primitive faith, and held by all the prophets, and most of the sages, in a form of more or less purity.

The sentence that I interpret, "by his peculiar gift," is literally, "by his peculiarity towards it," (the intellect), or "holding it (the intellect) as a creature more peculiarly his own," that is, more akin to his own spiritual nature.

²¹ It appears to have been an ancient custom in the East to employ tame monkeys to gather fruit from the trees. This practice is represented in paintings in the ancient Egyptian tombs; and in China these animals are trained to gather the leaves of the tea-plant. (See Lane's *Thousand-and-One Nights*, vol. iii. p. 106, note 66; in which also he quotes Williamson's *Ancient Egyptians*, vol. ii. p. 150.)

In s.A. 536, the story of the Bear and the

Monkey is given with some slight variations, both in the narrative and in the maxims. The bear is there named *Ahleb*, or the hairy; and the tale, appended to a maxim propounded by the author in his own name, begins thus: "And here I will insert a parable concerning dissimulation, which causes the loss of life. I say that perchance there might have been a bear," etc.

²² The first edition speaks of a hermit, but does not specify him to have been a Christian, an omission which could not but give offence to the dervises of his time. In it also the points of the story are more salient and applicable to hypocritical bigots of the Mussulman, as well as any other creed.

I have followed the reading of s. A. 536, abandoning it, however, at * for the second edition, which gives more particulars. In the latter the hermit is represented as a Christian, and his retreat in the neighbourhood of Laodicea; and, as if to remove all ground of offence, his character is altered, and he is represented as an old man worn out by the austerities he practised, and dispensing to the poor the abundant alms which he received. Whether by carelessness or design, however, the author leaves the pit-fall provided in the oratory of this holy man—a precaution manifestly appertaining to the hypocritical character of the personage he had at first portrayed, not to that of a pious and simple hermit, who had nothing

to fear at the hands of man. As Ibn Zafer retains the pit-fall, I have not scrupled likewise to retain the dialogue between the robber and the hermit, which was, of course, excluded from the edition which appears to have been subjected to a rigid Mussulman censorship, either self-imposed or compulsory.

²³ The word which I translated *scaling*, may also signify *perforating*, a common practice with thieves in the East, where walls are mostly slight, and formed of earth, or clay.

²⁴ Such is, doubtless, in this instance, the meaning of the word *tak*, a window, or arch.

²⁵ There appears to be here an omission or mistake, such as are frequently to be met with in MSS., but which I cannot rectify by it, as this dialogue exists only in s. A. 536. The reply of the hermit would make it appear, that allusion had been made to his mode of collecting the treasure, or that something should be added, to the effect that if he could not defend it by prostration, he had at least accumulated it by means of them.

²⁶ Khaizuran is the name of an Indian plant, a species of rattan, which has long serpentine roots, and is applied to all tender and flexible kinds of wood. It appears here to signify some one of the climbers or *lianes*, which abound in all parts of the East, and especially in Ghilan.—(See *Malte Brun's Geography*, vol iv., p. 554.)

²⁷ We find this identical tale in the *Arabian Nights*, edition of Cairo, of the year 1251 after the Hegira (1836), vol. i., p. 569, in the 387th and 388th Night. Lane gives it in a note to his admirable translation of the Thousand-and-One Nights. London, vol. ii., p. 582, note 29 to chap. xxviii.

On comparing the Cairo edition with the Arabic text of the Solwân, I find but very few and slight variations, and only these two essential differences :

First, that the maxims propounded by Ibn Zafer, and preceded by the words, "it was said," are wanting in the *Arabian Nights*, with the exception of the adage, "Gold shines in a house, like the sun in the world," which is given in the same place, but without the remainder of Ibn Zafer's sentence.

Second, that in the *Arabian Nights*, the miller, being more of a philosopher, does not commit suicide ; and that as usual the fable concludes with a short moral.

* (Page 128.) In all the MSS., except s.a., 536, the sentence ends here. Instead of "Accordingly it was said," the first edition has, "The author of the book says, 'It was said.' "

* (Page 134.) There is here a play upon words which it is impossible to translate. *Nafs*, signifies soul, or spirit, and *nafts*, an adjective, derived from the same root, signifies precious, beautiful, etc.

²⁸ The original has *Yunan*, or Ionians, the ge-

neric name for the whole Greek race, before the Byzantine period. I have been unable, notwithstanding all my research, to discover what king is here alluded to. But the fable has a Grecian character

²⁹ In the place of this paragraph the second edition has merely, "Hils, having finished his story, held his peace, and Bahram said." From the beginning of the section up to this point I have therefore adhered to the reading of the s. A. 536, which then continues to nearly the same effect as all the others.

In place of "First to enter and last to go forth," s. A. 536, has, "We will make you a garment under (our) garment." Ibn Badrun (*op. cit.*, p. 46) says of the celebrated Buz-urj-michr, the vizier of Chosroes Parwiz, or, according to others, of Chosroes Anûshirewân, that "he was the first to enter and the last to go forth" from his master's presence; and the same privilege was demanded from the Caliph Abdallah Ibn Zobair, by the famous Mokhtar, who claimed to be after him the first personage in the state. (*Journ. Asiat. nouvelle série*, vol. ix. p. 426.)

³⁰ Literally, "The sight of those flowers overwhelmed him with wonder, so that he recalled to mind," etc.

³¹ Literally, "excelling in the faculty of extemporising."

³² Ibn Zafer or the copyist doubtless forgot to insert here "the author says;" for the jester of Yezdejird, in the fifth century, could not have spoken of the observances enjoined upon a devout Mussulman, who, when entering the territory of Mecca on pilgrimage, was to observe various tokens of penitence, which, so far as we are aware, were not in use amongst the pagan Arabs, although pilgrimage had been customary from time immemorial; and the truce enforced between hostile tribes during the time of pilgrimage was similar to the *trêve de Dieu* of the middle ages, and existed long before the proclamation of the faith of Islam.

The *Isâb* is the covering for the head, and *Ihram* the cloak of penitence which pilgrims were commanded to wear.

This anecdote is found only in s. A. 536.

³³ The word here used, *short-el-wafâ*, signifies literally, "condition of integrity" or completeness. But although it was permitted by the Mussulman law to contract a marriage with the stipulated condition of taking no other wife (see the *Hedaya* or *Guide* translated by Ch. Hamilton, London, 1791, vol. i., p. 130, book 2, chap. iii), and although we find several examples of it in history, I do not believe *short-el-wafâ* to have been a legal term amongst the Mussulmans. It may, perhaps, be a translation of some foreign term, possibly an Indian one, since the scene is laid in Scind or the kingdom of the lower Indus.

³⁴ s. A. 535 places this saying in the mouth of Yezdejird. In s. A. 536 it is claimed by the author with the usual formula, "The author of the book says." Observe on this subject what Herodotus says of the ancient Persians (book 1, chap. cxxxviii.) "and they held it a great disgrace to tell a lie."

³⁵ I have corrected this word (which is incorrectly transcribed) from the Persian. It signifies captain of the host, or commander-in-chief. In s. A. 536 it is explained by the author himself to be "guardian of the armies, and emir of the emirs."

³⁶ s. A. 536 has "to their ranks (or seats) on the cushions of the royal apartments."

³⁷ The words which I have translated, "Peace, truce, and other matters" (more properly conditions or stipulations), and which are imperfectly defined in dictionaries are *Sulh*, *Hodnah*, and *Mowâda'h*.

³⁸ The Arabs appear to have cherished at times a firm belief in the efficacy of the imprecations of men of holy lives against wicked sovereigns. We read in the African chronicles that one of the earliest Aglabites of Africa, by name Ibrahim Ibn Abdallah, was visited by Heaven with an ulcer in the ear, which caused his death, on the prayer of some devotees of Kairwân, who implored God to deliver them from his tyranny in the year 201 of the Hegira (55-56).

³⁹ For the condition of vassalage of the kings of Hira, see note 13 of the present chapter. The name of Mondir, who succeeded his father two years before the death of Yezdejird, ought here to be substituted for that of No'man I., whose presence at the invasion of Persia is an anachronism.

⁴⁰ Literally, his appearance "filled their eyes with beauty, and their hearts with majesty."

⁴¹ These regiments of irregular cavalry were all enrolled, as is proved by their name, *Katibah*, literally *written*. They were, in fact, mercenaries, and are to be distinguished from the tribes who went to war for family or national causes whether just or unjust. The King of Hira marched at the head of his forces that is, of his standing army established by No'man, and was voluntarily followed by the men capable of bearing arms, who hoped to obtain booty or profit; but it was by the stranger Bahram that the aforesaid mercenaries were enrolled and paid.

⁴² Jundi-Shahpûr is mentioned only in s. A. 536. For it, see note 20 to chap. ii., and note 9 to the present chapter. Mirkond states Bahram Gour to have encamped beneath the walls of Madain or Ctesiphon. Jundi-Shahpûr, though for a time the residence of Sapor II., was certainly not considered the capital of Persia.

In s. A. 535 the author, perhaps aware of his error, suppressed the name of the city.

⁴³ The original puts *dhâri* "lions," which literally signifies sanguinary or predatory. Messrs. De Sacy and Caussin de Perceval, in recording this anecdote of Bahram Gour, translate this word *furieux* and *affamé*. I, however, presume to differ from both these eminent Orientalists upon the following grounds. Further on, Ibn Zafer says that the Persians, having found two *dhâri*-lions, kept them fasting for three days; hence, it is manifest that *dhâri* cannot signify famished. Secondly, we gave the etymological signification of the word, which, as I have said, is predatory or bloodthirsty. Lastly, all the records of Africa and Southern Asia, beginning with Bacchus, inform us that it was at all times customary in those countries to tame lions, tigers, and other wild beasts. We know that the Caliphs were accustomed to keep them in a state of domesticity, and we see frequent instances in Europe of their susceptibility of education. Some travellers have, moreover, stated that there is in Persia a species of lion without a mane, which may be tamed without much difficulty; and that these are trained for the chase, as well as the tiger, the panther, the leopard, etc. (See *Malte Brun's Geography*, vol. iv., p. 546). It appears to me that the adjective, *dhâri*, indicates the reverse of these domesticated animals: I therefore render it untamed.

"In Arabic *Mintâka*. It was a belt of metal,

enriched with various precious metals. (See R. Dozy, *Dictionnaire des Vêtements chez les Arabes*, p. 420). Both amongst the Indians and the Magians the belt was a symbol of their religion, and it was throughout the whole of the East an emblem of strength and endurance.

NOTES TO CHAPTER V.

¹ According to a tradition of Ayesha, the wife of Mahomet, and also to one of Ibn Abbas, the Prophet declared himself to have had a vision of an angel, exceeding the height of the Sanctuary of the Caaba from the waist upwards, who inquired of him whether he would prefer the condition of a poor prophet, or of a prophet-king, like Solomon. He raised his eyes to the countenance of the angel Gabriel to seek counsel from him, and receiving a sign to choose poverty, rather than riches or sovereignty, Mahomet selected the former. These two traditions are to be found in the *Mishcat-ul-Masabih* (Calcutta edit., vol. ii., p. 676).

² In place of consulting oracles, the pagan Arabs used to cast lots with arrows. When a marriage, a negotiation of uncertain issue, or the commencement of some important work, was in contemplation; when the pedigree, or proofs of the descent, of any person were missing; when it was required to discover the perpetrator of a crime, or to know the propitious moment for the burial of the dead,

the circumcision of an infant, &c., the persons desiring information went to the Caaba, where were kept in readiness seven arrows without points, called *Azlâm*, or *Kidâh*, on each of which was inscribed a device: "Yes;" "No;" "The price of blood;" "Stranger;" "One of yourselves;" "Addition;" "Water." The priest of the sanctuary, after receiving an ample fee, prayed to the god Hobal to reveal the truth; and then, putting all the arrows in a bag, drew forth one of them, the will of God being manifested by the device inscribed upon it. The arrows were sometimes more, and sometimes fewer in number, and often of various colours. They served likewise as lots to award prizes, and hence as a means of gambling, in which case the seventh arrow would win the principal lot. It is to this that allusion is made in the verses quoted. Both auguries and gaming were subsequently rigidly prohibited by Mahomet.

³ In none of the MSS. of the *Solwân* are these verses attributed to Ibn Zafer, but they are given under his name in the collection of his contemporary, Imad-eddin, entitled *Kharidât-el-Kasr*. Paris MS., A. F. 1414, vol. iii., fol. 249, verso.

⁴ Soliman, son of Abd-al-Malik, succeeded his brother Walid as Caliph in the year of the Hejira 96 (A.D. 715). In notes 9 and 23 to chap. i. we have spoken of the condition of the empire under

these two Ommeyad Caliphs. Soliman, a weak and vain prince, reigned two years and some months, and signalised himself only by putting to death the great captains who had recently achieved the conquest of Spain, the region beyond the Oxus, and some of the provinces of India. Omar Ibn Abd-el-Aziz, his cousin and successor, did not belie the lofty sentiments attributed to him by our author. He emulated the piety and stoical self-abnegation of the two first Caliphs, Abû Bekr and Omar Ibn Khattab; he banished luxury from his court; put an end to the shameful persecution of the house of Ali, but, on the other hand, commenced it against the Christians, being exasperated by the desertion of the Egyptian fleet which went over to the enemy in the Bosphorus. He died by poison not long after, in the year 101 (A.D. 720).

Concerning the merits of this sovereign, see the anecdotes related in the preface to the first edition of the present work.

Previous to this dialogue between Soliman and Omar, the MS., s. A. 536, inserts the following fragments :

Fol. 90, verso. Ammâr Ibn Yasîr, perceiving Ali to be grieved at the exaltation of Othman Ibn Affan to the Caliphate, relates to him a tradition of the prophet concerning a king of Israel (his name is not recorded), who went to visit three

devout hermits dwelling on the summit of a lofty mountain, the resort of wild beasts. On conversing with them, and becoming acquainted with the pious desire of one of them to reign in order that by his means justice might triumph, the king ceded his crown to him. But after the lapse of two months the holy man, troubled by the reproaches of his conscience, made his escape, and returned to his mountain solitudes.

Fol. 92, *recto*. A tradition of Abû Saïd el Hodhri (or El Khodhri) concerning the excellence of the just prince, who, according to Mahomet, should be placed the nearest to the throne of God at the day of judgment; also some other traditions of Abd-Allah Ibn Masû'd and of Anas concerning the qualities which the prince should possess.

Fol. 92, *verso*. Reflections on the causes which lead to abnegation, and other traditions of the Prophet concerning the precedence which the poor will obtain in paradise, into which they will enter five hundred years before the rich.

Fol. 94, *recto*. At the conclusion we find the dialogue between Soliman and Omar Ibn Abd-el-Aziz, with one addition. A thunder-bolt had fallen. The Caliph had prostrated himself with his face to the earth, and Omar said to him: "This is the voice of clemency: what wilt thou do when thou shalt hear that of justice?"

* These verses are to be found likewise in Imad-eddin's collection, entitled "*Kharidat el-*

Kasr. In s. A. 536 we find in the first verse "vanity of the world" instead of "desire of that which thou needest not."

⁶ In s. A. 536, the *Kharidat el Kasr*, and other MSS., we find "a spark of fire." s. A. 535 has the variation "an atom of saw-dust."

⁷ *Kassidah* is a poem of many verses upon a single rhyme. The name is derived from the verb "to seek," "to make search" for something, which reminds us of the *trouvères* and *troubadours* of Provençal literature.

This fragment and the following one are wanting in s. A. 536, and appear to have been composed by the author subsequently to the first edition of the *Solwân*. In place of them we find the following fragments in prose, which do not appear in the second edition :

Fol. 95, *recto*. A tradition of Nafi (a slave of Ibn Omar, born in Dilem Ghilan, who died in the year 117 of the Hegira), related by Abd-Allah Ibn Omar, son of the second Caliph, and of which the outline is as follows: A king who lived in bygone times desired to erect a palace with which no fault could be found. Having completed the building, he gave a feast in it, and posted three of his officials at the door to interrogate the guests as they went forth. Only two critics were found among them, who, when brought into the presence of the king, maintained that there were two serious objections to the palace: namely, that it would

one day fall into ruins, and that it would witness the death of its owner. "But is there any dwelling," inquired the king, "which is free from these objections?" The two strangers replied in the affirmative, and that such was the dwelling of God—namely, Paradise; into which if he desired to enter, he must change his religion. The king thereupon resolved to abandon his sovereignty, and lead a holy life with them. His daughter accompanied him in the disguise of a man, and they retired to a remote monastery where the king was unknown, and where the daughter supported him by tilling the ground, according to the practice of the monks. After experiencing many vicissitudes by reason of the princess's concealment of her sex, which, however, she maintained to the last, the king died of a broken heart, and his daughter was expelled, her innocence of the offences imputed to her not being made manifest until her death, when she was buried with her father. Ibn Omar concludes by stating that they were both honoured as saints by the people, who were wont to put up prayers at their tomb in times of drought or pestilence.

Fol. 97, *recto*. The author then alludes to the examples afforded by the companions of the Prophet, who either refused authority or abdicated after accepting it; for the sake of brevity, he specifies only Omair Ibn Sa'd el Ansâri, who had been appointed Governor of Emesa by the Caliph Omar Ibn Khattab.

Fol. 99, *verso*. Next follows the anecdote of No'man, King of Hira, which we find in the other three MSS., and which I have marked § vi., so that are wanting in s. A. 536, not only the verses already stated, but also the anecdote of Horka, daughter of the last King of Hira, and the abdication of Moawia Ibn Yezid, §§ iv. and v.

⁸ The word which I have translated *country* is *dār*, literally a circle, an enclosure, and hence an enclosure containing a certain number of tents; or if it be in a city, a house. The term, however, has a more extended meaning in Arabic, answering nearly to the expression, *in doors and out of doors*. Here it is manifest that it is employed to denote the world, which betrays those who put their trust in it, but is powerless against those who despise it, and suffers no one to prolong his sojourn in it.

⁹ It is impossible to give a perfectly literal translation of the third verse.

¹⁰ No'man V., of whom we shall have to speak more at length in note 20, ascended the throne, A. D. 583, and was deposed A. D. 605. With him, ended, his dynasty, and soon after him the independence of Hira, which became a province of Persia in 614, and of the Mussulman empire in 683.

All the chroniclers, with the exception of Hamza of Ispahan, speak of an only daughter of this No'man, by name Hind, married at the

age of eleven years to A'di Ibn Zeid (see note 20). When No'man cast A'di into prison, with intent to put him to death (A. D. 589), he compelled him first to divorce Hind, who retired to a convent which she had founded in the neighbourhood of Hira, and passed the rest of her life in bewailing the loss of her husband. She was still living in 661, when one Moghaïra, Governor of Irak, under the Ommeyad Caliph Moawia, visited her in her convent and asked her in marriage. Hind, who was then a very old woman, answered Moghaïra plainly that his motive was merely one of vanity, that he might be able to boast that both the kingdom and the daughter of No'man were his, and therefore she positively refused his suit. (See Caussin de Perceval, *Essai*, etc., vol. ii., pp. 142—151, and Sacy, *Chrestomathie Arabe*, vol. ii., p. 448.) On the other hand, the commentator on the Poetic Anthology entitled *Hamasa*, when quoting the same two verses given by Ibn Zafer, premises that Horka and her brother Horek (a name derived from the same root), were children of No'man, without adding anything further. Lastly, Hamza of Ispahan (Petersburg edition, p. 112), numbers both Hind and Horka amongst the children of No'man, and thus sets at rest every doubt as to the distinct individuality of the two, did there not appear so strong a resemblance between the two as to give rise to the supposition that Horka

(a flame or conflagration,) might have been a surname bestowed upon Hind, who would seem to have merited it; and that Hamza might possibly have been led into error by the two-fold appellation. s. A. 535 gives the name of the princess as Hozeka. In the others it is written sometimes thus, sometimes Horka.

For Sa'd Ibn Abi Wakkas, see note 5 to chap. iv. We know that he gained the battle of Kadesia, A. D. 636. He remained two months in the city of that name, confined by severe illness, and then marched against Hira. The daughter of No'man was living in a convent, as we learn from Ibn Zafer, and went forth, doubtless well pleased, to present herself before the victor, who, if he did not profess the Christian religion, was at least one of her nation, and came to liberate her from that, which to the Christians of Hira, was at once the foreign and infidel yoke of the Persians.

¹¹ Amr Ibn Ma'di Karîb, of the tribe of Zobeid, which owed its origin to Yemen, although at a very advanced age, distinguished himself by his prowess at the battle of Kadesia, where, according to some, he slew with his own hand the hostile commander, Rustem. He was a poet and warrior of great reputation, and in his earlier years, the rival of Antar, the Rinaldo of the Arabs. He adopted the faith of Islam when he became aware of the rising fortunes of Mahomet, and was soon

after moved by envy to revolt. He returned to his allegiance, however, in the time of Abû Bekr, who received him gladly on account of his military fame, which a few years later caused Omar to write thus to Sa'd Ibn Abi Wakkas: "I send thee two thousand men, namely Tulaya and Amr Ibn Ma'di Karîb." This was on occasion of the expedition against the Persians, when Amr commanded all the warriors of his tribe. His revolt and subsequent return to the faith of Islam would make it appear that his convictions were not very profound, and in fact so little attention did he pay to the Koran, that being examined by Sa'd on the subject of his religious acquirements, he was able to repeat no more than the words, "In the name of God the Merciful and Clement." For this he was deprived of a great part of the booty he had obtained at Kadesia. But requirements so strict could not always be enforced by the Mussulman conquerors; and thus we find the Caliph Omar shortly after commanding that this gallant warrior should be rewarded according to his deserts. (See Caussin de Perceval, *Essai*, vol. iii., book x. *passim*.)

¹² The word which I have translated "many-coloured," is *dibaj*, explained in the dictionaries to mean garments made of silks of various colours and designs; but it signifies the material rather than the garment, for further on Ibn Zafer speaks of carpets made of *dibaj*. s. A. 537 says merely

“cloth of silk was spread out for a carpet.” This Arabic word represents the Persian *dibàh*, a corruption of the Greek word *διβαφος*, from which is derived the Latin *dibaphus*. I am indebted for this philological information to M. Hase, librarian of the *Bibliothèque Nationale*, at Paris.

¹³ The word which I have here rendered as “a protector,” is *dsimmah* (literally protectorship), a species of insurance of life and property granted by the Mussulmans to their subjects of other creeds, to the exclusion, however, of idolators. The *dsimmi*, or protected persons, were required to pay a tribute, and to observe certain outward tokens of vassalage. (See note 35, chap. i.)

¹⁴ The Arabs bestowed this well-merited distinction upon the first four Caliphs, who had derived their power from popular election.

¹⁵ Moawia II., the son of Yezid, the son of Moawia, and third of the Ommeyad Caliphs, ascended the throne in the year 64 (A. D. 683). At the moment when Abdallah Ibn Zobair having shut himself up in Mecca, defied the power of the house of Ommeyah, which, accursed by all for the recent slaughter of the sons of Ali and the profanation of Medina; detested for its usurpation of power; the antagonism of race, waiting but the signal to burst forth amidst its hosts; the new dynasty tottered on its throne. Moawia II., a youth of one-and-twenty, educated by one Omar-el-Maksus, of the sect of the Kadarites wha

asserted the free will of man, looked upon his father and grandfather as usurpers, and considered it a sin to retain the sovereign power without being conscious of his capacity to wield it. Whether it be regarded as an act of heroic self-abnegation or of cowardly indolence, he abdicated after a reign of forty days, or, according to others, of three months. Haranguing the people from the tribune, he frankly told them that he did not consider himself equal to the task of bearing the burden of the Caliphate, and that he would not appoint a successor; because, unlike Abû Bekr, he knew of no Omar to take his place. He concluded by bidding them elect a Caliph according to their own pleasure. (Abulfeda, *Annals*, vol. i., p. 403, and the *Universal History*, modern part, vol. ii., p. 119, a very accurate compilation, drawn up with the aid of two unpublished MSS.) According to Ibn el Athir (Paris MS., Constantinople copy, vol. iii., fol. 81, *recto*, year 64,) Moawia the Less died, some say three months, and others twenty days later, at the age of twenty. Ibn el Athir gives the brief discourse which he pronounced from the tribune on his abdication, and adds that he was no more seen, and died shortly after, probably from poison.

¹⁶ All the MSS. agree in this passage, with only one variation, which does not affect the sense. The expression which I have translated "the abdication," signifies in fact "the longing for that

which is lost." I have merely substituted cause for effect, and the honest frankness of Moawia is unimpaired by the change.

¹⁷ This insipid prose, written with a sort of pretence at rhythm, is divided into verses of twelve syllables, which rhyme in couples.

¹⁸ Abû Leïla, literally "the father of dark night." The *Universal History* quoted above informs us that this surname was bestowed upon Moawia II.

¹⁹ In the early days of Islam, when the law had more influence than individual will, and the nation was still animated by the spirit of freedom, the office of Cadi was altogether independent, and even princes acknowledged his authority. But in the subsequent days of tyranny and despotism, all power became concentrated in the court and in the executive, and the office of cadi, or judge, was no longer a restraint upon any but the weak and insignificant.

²⁰ Before proceeding to give a biographical sketch of this statesman and man of letters, it will be necessary to explain the relative positions of the kings of Hira, and their suzerains, the monarchs of Persia, in the sixth century after Christ.

We have already seen (note 13 to chap. iv.) that these powerful vassals of the Sassanides, at the head of the Arab tribes of Irak and Mesopotamia, were like the commanders of a body of light cavalry covering the great Persian camp, in the continual

wars between them and the Romans. The geographical situation of the kingdom of Hira compelled the Sassanides to keep a strict watch over its sovereigns, who, by leaguings with the enemy, might have reduced them to the extremity of peril. And this fear was not altogether groundless, if my supposition be correct, that No'man I. did cherish a project of rebellion. Mondir IV. put it into execution, by openly uniting himself with the Romans, although he recovered the favour of the Persians by a second act of treachery, in punishment of which he ended his days as an exile in Sicily, the fortune of war having delivered him into the hands of the Romans, (A D. 583). The court of Ctesiphon maintained a body of soldiers in Hira, under the title of auxiliaries, as a check upon any such designs, and also many agents, both secret and acknowledged, the chief of whom appears to have been the postmaster-general, a confidential office usually bestowed upon the sons of Satraps. The business of this office, under the Caliphs is well known; it was to transmit correspondence and maintain a system of *espionage* upon the prefects of the provinces; and as the Caliph copied for the most part the institutions of the Sassanides, there can be little doubt that the postmasters-general of Hira were members of a species of Persian police. The circumstance here related proves, that in order to have the kings of Hira more completely in their power, the Persian

government failed not to give ear to the complaints of their subjects against them, and the family of A'di appears to have been one of the instruments of this policy, which ultimately deposed the native dynasty and caused Hira to be governed by a Satrap, like the rest of the provinces.

A'di Ibn Zeid Ibn Hammâr was sprung from an offshoot of the tribe of Temîm, which, in the fourth century, had abandoned its original abode in the confines of Yemama, and sought refuge in Hira, to escape the threatened vengeance of an enemy. This family was also known as I'badite or Christian, for the I'badites having been the first converts the appellation was afterwards extended to all the Christians of Hira; and we learn from the *Kitâb el Aghâni* that the ancestors of A'di had for a long time professed the Christian faith. One of these, Hammâr, who had the advantage—in those days an unusual one—of being able to write, became secretary to No'man III., but did not neglect, at the same time, to ingratiate himself with the masters of his master, by attaching himself to a Persian noble or magistrate dwelling at Hira, who had the title of Satrap and enjoyed great credit at the court of Ctesiphon, and to whom at his death he committed his son Zeïd. The Satrap caused his ward to study Persian, and recommended him so strongly to Chosroes Anûshirewân, that the latter conferred upon him the directorship of the post at Hira of which we have already made mention.

Chosroes was no doubt well pleased to entrust this office to a Christian and a native of Hira, who might win over to him the affections of the people, which were becoming more and more alienated from the Nasrite dynasty, and the court of Ctesiphon was so well pleased with his performance of the duties imposed upon him, that, in the year 579, he was entrusted with the regency, (whether by a direct decree, or by an authoritative suggestion to the citizens of Hira, does not appear), at a period of interregnum, during which it appears that the Persian monarch hesitated whether to depose the Nasrite dynasty altogether, or to suffer it to continue a little longer on the scene. He at length decided in favour of the latter course, and bestowed the crown upon Mondir IV., in reward of the double treachery above mentioned; but the citizens of Hira, refusing to endure his oppressions and exactions, rose in rebellion, and were about to proclaim Zeïd king; but that cautious minister made use of the popular movement, not to obtain a title which he could not have maintained, but, to gain another step in the direction pointed out by his master. He pacified the tumult by a compromise; Mondir retaining the title of king and the command of the forces, while he, Zeïd, conducted the civil administration; and so precarious was the position of the king of Hira, exposed to the pressure of his own subjects from within, and of the kingdom of Persia from without,

that he was reduced to be grateful to his subject for the mutilated authority which Zeïd had enabled him to retain.

Meanwhile A'di, the son of Zeïd, had attained to the highest pitch of power and honour. He was a youth of brilliant and versatile genius, and of poetic temperament; but supple in intrigue, and apt at dissimulation. He was charged, in conjunction with his father, with the education of an infant Nero, who was one day to put him to death, the son of Mondir, afterwards No'man V. King of Hira, surnamed Abû Kabûs. From the petty court of Hira, A'di was soon removed to more brilliant destinies at that of Ctesiphon, about the year 574. Upon the recommendation of Zeïd, and his patron the Satrap, Chosroes Anûshirewân extended to him his favour and appointed him Secretary of State for the affairs of Arabia, an office of great importance, seeing that the greater part of the peninsula was more or less subject to the authority of the kings of Persia. Two of A'di's brothers likewise obtained a footing at court in the days of Chosroes, or of Hormuz IV., his successor, who, although a prince of a gloomy disposition, and who had a horror of men of letters, nevertheless forgave A'di his poetical genius in consideration of his diplomatic skill, and entrusted to him, about 581, an important mission to Constantinople, on which occasion he had the opportunity of visiting many parts of the Roman

empire, and of devoting himself to the new studies to which our author alludes. He was still in Syria, after the accomplishment of his mission, when the aforesaid rebellion took place against Mondir.

On his return shortly after to Hira, A'di was received with great honour both by the king and the people, who went forth to meet him, and who all looked upon him as their protector, and honoured him for his learning. He made use of his influence for the conversion to Christianity of his pupil Abû Kabûs, whose name has been frequently confounded with that of No'man I., who flourished two centuries earlier; for, notwithstanding the leaning of the latter towards Christianity, and its rapid progress in Hira, the sovereigns had hitherto continued idolators. It happened, one day, that A'di was riding with No'man Abû Kabûs, near a burial ground, situated between the city and the river, according to the *Kitâb el Aghâni* (vol. i., fol. 90, *recto*), and the poet took occasion to point out to him the vanity of all human things, the moral beauty of the gospel, and perhaps also the benefit he might derive from the favour of the Christian population of Hira, which was rich in numbers and in wealth, and governed by a bishop and his subordinate clergy. I am led to this last uncharitable supposition by the fact that, but a short time afterwards, No'man obtained from the bishop a loan of 80,000 *dirhems*, for the purpose of

corrupting the courtiers of Hormuz, and securing the crown for himself, to the exclusion of his brothers. Both the loan and bribery were negotiated by A'di, and thus it is evident that No'man failed not to turn his conversion to account in no very praiseworthy manner.

The throne of Hira having become vacant in 583 by the imprisonment of Mondir IV., two great obstacles barred the path of No'man to the succession. The first was, the project of the court of Ctesiphon to do away with the semblance of an independent sovereignty at Hira, and, secondly, the claims of eleven other candidates, sons of Mondir, all older than No'man, and comely in person—a great recommendation both at Hira and Ctesiphon, and one altogether wanting to No'man, who was small, wizened, and tainted with leprosy. It may be, however, that these very defects made No'man appear the less formidable. A'di put forward his pretensions, concealing his designs with the cunning of a serpent, under a mask of guilelessness. He gave No'man golden keys and wise directions how to steer his course, misleading his brothers by treacherous counsels, until the triumph of his candidate was secured.

It appears to me, that the following incident must have taken place after the accession of No'man, although the chroniclers refer it to the reign of Mondir IV., thus invalidating their own prolix accounts of A'di's intrigues, as all dissimu-

lation would have been vain when the interests of his own father-in-law were at stake. Be this as it may, it so happened that A'di, in one of his frequent visits to Hira, beheld Hind, the daughter of No'man, partaking of the Lord's Supper in the church of St. Thomas, on Holy Thursday, and falling in love with her at first sight, as did Petrarch with Laura, he asked her in marriage, although he was full forty years of age, and she scarcely more than a child. No'man, probably well pleased to ally himself with A'di, consented without hesitation.

The treachery, by which he soon after put to death his preceptor, apostle, protector, and son-in-law, is attributed by the chroniclers to a court intrigue. According to them, the tutor of one of No'man's brothers, indignant at having been outwitted by A'di at the time of the election, in revenge calumniated him to the king, representing A'di as holding him in contempt, and intriguing against him. Moreover, the relative positions of Hira and Ctesiphon would make it well nigh impossible that there should subsist anything but mortal aversion between the minister for Arabia at the Persian court, and his creature, the Nasrite king. At all events, we know that about 589 No'man engaged in the perpetration of an atrocious crime, at the manifest risk both of his throne and life. He invited A'di to come to Hira, then cast him into prison, and compelled him to repudiate

Hind; and was still hesitating to take his life, when a message arrived from the King of Persia, who, apprised of the event, commanded the instant liberation of A'di. No'man replied that A'di was dead, caused him to be strangled the same night, and bribed the messenger to declare that A'di had died a natural death, although he had himself seen him in prison, where A'di had implored him to remain with him, being well aware of what was impending. But the tyrant did not escape unpunished. Many years had elapsed, and fresh causes of hostility had sprung up between No'man and his powerful suzerain, when Chosroes Parwiz ascended the throne of Persia, and appointed as his secretary Zeïd, the son of A'di, who, in order to avenge his father, organised a base conspiracy to induce the King of Persia to put No'man to death. The King of Hira was summoned to Ctesiphon, and, well knowing the meaning of this royal mandate, took refuge in the deserts of Arabia, where he wandered from tribe to tribe, seeking refuge, until, weary of this miserable existence, he at length presented himself at the court of Persia, hoping to obtain either pardon or immediate death. In place of these he met with mockery, a long captivity, and at length a cruel end; if it be true that he was trampled under foot by elephants. No'man V., surnamed Abû Kabûs, reigned from 583 to 605, and with him ended the Nasrite or Lakhmite dynasty.—(See Hamza of Ispahan, Peters-

burgh edition, p. 111; the *Kitáb-el-Agháni*, Paris MS., vol. i., fol. 84, *recto*, *seqq.* containing a long biography of A'di; Quatremère, translation of a part of it; *Journal Asiatique*, *Juillet à Décembre*, 1835, p. 525, etc.; Caussin de Perceval, and the authorities quoted by him in the *Essai sur l'Histoire des Arabes*, etc., vol. ii., p. 135, etc., and the whole of Book iv., *passim*; Ibn Badrun, Arabic text, p. 129-33, where we find several fragments of the poems of A'di. Concerning Hind, his wife, see note 10 to the present chapter.)

It now only remains for us to speak of the works of A'di, or rather of his verses, for only some fragments of the latter have been preserved to us, which are scattered through the *Solwán*, the *Kitáb el Agháni*, the commentary of *Ibn Badrun*, and the *Hamasa*, in which two of them are quoted as specimens of purity of language. (Arabic text, pp. 68 and 436.) The *Kitáb el Agháni*, or book of songs, is a comprehensive anthology of the ancient Arab poets, compiled at the commencement of the tenth century after Christ, by a learned native of Ispahan, by name Abû'l Faraj Ali Ibn Hosain, a prodigy of patience and gifted with a wonderful memory, but with rather confused ideas and indifferent taste. He bears witness to the fame of A'di by consecrating to him an article (which fills some half dozen large sheets of close writing in the Paris MS.) in which he states him to have been a citizen, that is not educated amongst the

Bedouins, and not numbered amongst the principal poets of Arabia. Accordingly he quotes one or two philological errors, into which an Arab of the desert would not have fallen; while on the other hand Tebrizi, in his commentary on the *Hamasa*, in the fifth century after the Hegira, quotes A'di as a classical writer; thus proving that the Arabs were not agreed upon these points. And, doubtless, if the greater number of critics turned their attention to language only, there must have been some who looked beyond mere style; such appear to have been the celebrated Asma'i and Abû Obeïda, who held that "A'di was amongst the poets as Canopus amongst the stars; rivalling with all and following the course of none;" (see *Kitâb el Aghâni*, vol. i. fol. 84, *recto*; and Ibn Badrun, Arabic text, p. 129;) for such appears to me to be the meaning of the passage, although M. Quatremère has given a somewhat different interpretation of it. (See *Jour. Asiatique*, *loc. cit.*, p. 527.) In fact, the fragments of A'di's poems, which have been handed down to us, differ from the usual style of Arab verse. Accustomed to the sublime poetry of Holy Scripture, and acquainted, probably, with the writings of Homer and Virgil, and undoubtedly with those of moral philosophy in vogue at the court of Persia, he could not restrain his genius within the narrow limits of Arcadian heroism; but soaring into the regions of intellectual passion, if I

may be permitted thus to express myself, he could not dispense with some innovations in language to express ideas so new. Judging from the fragments preserved to us by Ibn Zafer, which breathe something of the same serene melancholy which we find in the *Trionfi* of Petrarch, I can easily believe that the critics of the time of Harûn-al-Raschid might compare A'di to Canopus, the gem of constellations, unknown to our northern heaven; and the internal evidence which his verses afford, that he had struck out a new path in imitation of the poets of other lands, is confirmed by the tradition that he composed his first verses, or at least his first of any note, during his stay in Syria and at Damascus, on his return from Constantinople. (See Caussin de Perceval, *Essai sur l' Hist. des Arabes*, ii. 141.)

²¹ We cannot tell whether this be merely a mistake, or an allusion to a fact concerning which the chroniclers are silent. Mondir III, surnamed *Ibn Má-es-semâ*, or "son of the water of heaven," for so his mother was called on account of her marvellous beauty, reigned from 513 to 562; to Mondir succeeded Amr III. and to him two princes who are supposed to have reigned till 579, when Zeïd governed Hira for a time, not as the lieutenant of the king, but as regent deputed by the Monarch of Persia, or possibly by the election of the people, (Caussin de Perceval, vol .ii. p. 129). Zeïd was intrusted with the directorship of the post or Persian

police of Hira in the latter years of Mondir III., so it is possible that he might already have acted as regent during the interregnum which followed upon the death of that prince, or even in his absence during the campaign in Syria, in which he met his death by treachery.

²² See note 13 to chap. iv.; and be it remembered that the introduction of A'di Ibn Zeïd in the time of No'man I. is an anachronism corrected by our author himself, and that he lived in the time of No'man V.

²³ The word that I translate *plain*, is *raudhèh*, garden, or damp soil rich in vegetation. But the definition of *Shakîka* given by our author, leads me to prefer *plain* to *garden*, which would imply cultivation. He preserved these plains probably merely in the sense of pasture-lands.

²⁴ S. A. 536 says only "cushions;" the word itself so used in our western languages is doubtless derived from the Arabic, *hasha*, literally *stuffed*. For *dibaj*, see note 12 of the present chapter.

²⁵ Bahraman is the safflower, or bastard saffron. The red or scarlet pavilion was a symbol of sovereignty amongst the Arabs, before the time of Mahomet. (See De Slane, English Trans. of *Ibn Khallikan's Biographical Dictionary*, vol. i., p. 641, note 2.)

²⁶ S. A. 536. The other MSS. after mentioning the excitement or gaiety of the king, continue at once, "then turning to A'di he held this discourse

with him," thus attributing all No'man's moral and poetic reflections to the fumes of the wine.

²⁷ This form of greeting was very ancient amongst the Arabs, and was in use at the court of Yemen, (the first of which mention is made in the traditions of Arabia) some centuries before the Christian era. (*Caussin de Perceval, Essai*, etc. i. 50; ii. 131.) It was adopted at the court of Hira, under No'man Ibn Mondir, according to Masudi, and to Ibn Badrun, (*op. cit.* p. 96.)

²⁸ Caussin de Perceval (*op. cit.* ii. p. 143) gives this verse in Arabic. It is likewise found in the *Kitâb-el-Aghâni* (Paris, vol. i. fol. 90, *verso*).

²⁹ This sentence is in the original translation *motanawajat* or *motanawahat*, which I find in no dictionary, but which, judging by the signification of the root, would mean "shaken by the wind;" or in the second reading might likewise be interpreted "planted opposite to one another," (that is in rows,) or else "lugubrious."

³⁰ I have translated as "calamity," the expression *Somm'-el-Jibâl* — literally "the deaf ones (feminine) of the mountains," for the following reasons. In Fréytag's *Proverbia Arabum* (vol. i. chap. 14. Nos. 5 and 17), Ibnat-el-Jébel, or "daughter of the mountain," signifies calamity; and has the same signification as *Sommi Semami* in the dictionary entitled *Kamûs*, which means, "Misfortune do thy worst!" As the French would say, "*Il lui est tombé un pavé sur la tête.*" (See *Somm.* in the Arabic dictionaries.)

In the Paris MS. A. F. 950, we find a tradition of Mahomet to the following effect, preserved by Ibn Abbas, recorded by some learned Arab in a marginal note to this singular expression: When Adam fell down from Paradise upon the mountain of Serendib, still known as Adam's peak in Ceylon, his head yet reached to heaven, and he could hear the hymns of the angels, and behold them hovering around the throne of God; but being seized with fear at this sight, which before his disobedience had been familiar to his eyes, he bowed himself towards the earth, whereupon his stature suddenly diminished to sixty cubits, from its previous height of a hundred (thousand?) when he compassed three days' journey at a single stride. Being thus unable to see the sights, to hear the sounds, or even to smell the fragrance of Paradise, Adam bitterly bewailed his fate, and a voice from heaven answered him: "It beseems thee well, since thou hast so willed it." Such is the tradition, and from it the Mussulmans may no doubt learn that Adam was once upon mount Serendib, and became hard of hearing, but that this should explain the expression, "the deaf ones of the mountains," as here employed, appears to me a very far-fetched idea. Moreover, A'di, as a Christian, was not likely to repose implicit belief in an Arabic legend, if pagan; and could know nothing of it if Mussulman, as he died before the time of Mahomet.

²¹ The word used in the original is *Fudûm* the plural of *Fedam*, which signifies "a strainer." It was

also applied to a piece of linen with which the Magians were accustomed to cover their mouths while drinking, or through which they drank. This, which was originally, no doubt, a hygienic precaution, or a scruple of cleanliness, became subsequently a superstitious practice; and it is not surprising that the Fedam should be mentioned by A'di, who lived at the court of Persia, where the religion of Zoroaster was observed. I leave it to antiquarians to decide whether these *fedams* were ever of any durable material, and fastened on to flasks for a journey, in order that all might drink without touching the mouth of the bottle, as the verses of A'di would lead one to imagine.

³² These verses are given with few variations in the *Kitab-el-Aghani*, *loc. cit.* and two of them by Hamza of Ispahan (See Caussin de Perceval, *Essai*, etc., vol. ii. pp. 143-4) and likewise by Ibn Bassâm (See Dozy, *Historia Abbadidarum*, vol. i.. pp. 308, 344).

According to the commentary on the *Kitâb-el-Aghânî*, A'di recited or extemporised these two fragments of poetry, on two separate days, at sight of certain sepulchres between the walls of Hira and a branch of the Euphrates, which flowed at no great distance from the city.

³³ When the Arab writers meet with various statements of an historic fact, they generally elude the difficulty by means of this pious exclamation. In this case all we can do is to follow their example.

Ibn Zafer who above ascribes the conversion and abdication to No'man, the elder son of Imrulkais, here refers it to No'man Ibn Mondir, called the Elder. All the MSS. agree in this reading.

³⁴ In place of Anûshirewân, s.a., 536, and some other MSS. put Abû Sassan, which would make it appear that Chosroes had a son of that name; but the Persian chronicles mention only Hormuz, who succeeded him, and Nushizan, the son of a Christian mother and himself a Christian, who revolted, was defeated, and was put to death by the command of his father.

The Sapor here mentioned may be either the First or Second; both were famous for the glory of their arms.

³⁵ Literally, *Benû-'l-Asfar*, "sons of the yellow, or fair." That the Orientals should bestow this appellation upon the people of the West, would not be surprising, but it is less easy to say why they should in general confine it to the Roman emperors; and all the explanations hitherto afforded by oriental erudition, have been unsatisfactory. I therefore hazard a conjecture of my own, suggested to me by Ibn Zafer. In the story of Ain Ahlih (chap. II., § vi.), he represents the Roman empire, by *Sitt-ad-dahab*, "the lady of gold," on account of the wealth of the country. Now as the word *asfar*, yellow, is used in speaking of gold likewise, the appellation "sons of gold," might not be inapplicable to the Byzantine

emperors, more famous for their wealth than for their military achievements.

Be this as it may, as A'di lived in the fifth century, the epithet could apply only to the Roman emperors, properly so called, not to those of Frank or German race.

³⁶ In place of a note, I am here compelled to insert a dissertation which has cost me much labour, and, which I could less afford, much time also. But by no other means can I give a sketch of the facts to which our author alludes, because a sketch must be taken from history, and here history itself was wanting.

I have derived much assistance from the narratives of the travels of Messrs. Ross and Ainsworth (published in the *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society*, vols. ix. and xi., with several illustrations, and a map of the course of the Tigris, by Lieutenant Lynch, of the Indian navy); and also many valuable hints from the works of MM. Caussin de Perceval, and MM. Quatremère, on the Nabatheans. Guided by them I have diligently examined the Arabic authors to be found at Paris; and comparing their testimony with that furnished by the writings of the Greeks and Romans, and with the evidence of the monuments still extant, I have compiled the following notice concerning Atra or Hadhr, the walls of which three times arrested the progress of the Roman eagles in the second century of the Christian era.

Hadhr is situated in Upper Mesopotamia, a day's journey to the S.S.W. of Mosul, in the midst of the desert of Sinjar, which extends between the Tigris and the Khabur, (Chabores), a tributary of the Euphrates, and is bisected in a line almost parallel with the course of the Tigris, by the deep waters of the Tharthar, which takes its rise in the mountains of Sinjar, (Singara), and loses itself in a brackish lake, thence called by the Arabs, *el-Malih*, its course being marked by a zone of fertile vegetation. It flows three or four miles to the eastward of Hadhr, amidst the ruins of which is a deep conduit traversing the whole of the city, and which, according to Masudi, communicated with the river, whence it conveyed the water necessary for the requirements of so numerous a population ; and it appears to me probable, that if Hadhr is now deserted and serves only as a halting-place for the wandering tribes, who come to slake their thirst at its spring, and to pasture their flocks in the neighbourhood, it is principally in consequence of the difficulty of restoring this conduit. The walls of Hadhr are almost entire. They are more than ten feet in thickness, built of granular lime-stone, brought, it is supposed, from the mountains of Sinjar, cut square and connected together with the greatest accuracy. They form a circle of geometric precision an English mile in diameter, and are defended by square towers, at regular intervals of

sixty paces according to Ross, or irregular ones according to Ainsworth, who states them to be thirty-two in number. The *Merʿsid-el-Ittilaʿ*, a compendium with a few additions drawn up in the fifteenth century, of the great geographical dictionary, written by Yakut in the thirteenth, gives a somewhat similar account of these fortifications: "Hadhr is a city opposite to Tekrit, in the desert which extends from the latter to Mosul and the Euphrates. Hadhr is built entirely of hewn stone, as well the palaces as the markets and the gates. It is said to have had sixty great towers; between each of which were nine lesser ones. Opposite to each of the (*great*) towers, there rose a castle, and beside it, (*perhaps meaning the city*), a bath on (*corresponding with*) the river Tharthar, which is a branch of the Harmàs, a river of Nisibis, swelled by many other rivers. Hadhr is destroyed, nothing remaining of it but the vestiges of the wall, and some other remains, which still give evidence of its past grandeur and power." (Paris MS., article *Hadhr*). Besides the towers and curtain, Ross and Ainsworth make mention of a broad and deep ditch encircling the wall, bounded on the outer side by a steep embankment or glacis, beyond which, on two rising grounds, to the north and east, that is, in the direction of the river Tharthar, two square towers are still extant.

To proceed to the interior of the city, it was

divided transversely by four paved streets, which, perhaps, gave access to four gates, although but one now remains. These streets meet in the exact centre of the circle, where we behold the splendid remains of what was in the opinion of Ainsworth, at once a temple and a palace. At a short distance from this edifice are the ruins of several lesser ones. The remains of small dwellings are scattered over the rest of the area, and on the eastern side are vestiges of tombs, within an extensive segment formed by the conduit, which, traversing the city from north to south, divides it into two unequal parts. The only remaining gate is situated in the centre of the arc by which this segment is circumscribed, and faces the east. Thus the ground plan of Hadhr forms a geometrical figure; the circumference, measured by Ainsworth, is three miles and one hundred and eighty yards, that is exactly a parasang; the four streets are directed towards the four cardinal points; in short, everything combines to prove that mathematical science presided over the construction of the city.

Ainsworth appears to me to have had good grounds for denying the high antiquity of the central edifices. He remarks the perfect similarity of their architecture to that of the antiquities of Nisibis—the round arches—the elegant tracery of the capitals—the sculpture in relief upon stone—in short, the relics of Greek or Roman art

(probably the former, modified as it was under the Roman empire in the first centuries of the Christian era, at a period corresponding with the date of the buildings of Nisibis). These remains, according to Ainsworth, are much more splendid than the famous arch of Chosroes, at Ctesiphon. The halls, all of them vaulted, front the east. Amongst the decorations are many human heads, some with their hair dressed in the Persian fashion, some crowned with laurel, and others with the Chaldean turban, or the twisted kerchiefs of the Arabs. The effigies on the architraves are heads surrounded with rays; two winged griffins turning towards a human face, round as the moon and placed between them, a griffin extending its paw over the head of a bull, and eagles, or falcons holding a scroll in their bills, all of which are undoubtedly symbols of the worship of Mithras, which prevailed for so long a period in Western Asia; and above all, on the shores of the Euphrates and Tigris engrafted itself, in Persia, upon the more spiritual creed of Zoroaster, and extended itself into the West, blending with the polytheism of Greece and Rome. The human figures representing various races would appear at first sight, as Ainsworth observes, to represent the various dominations which succeeded each other at Hadhr; but this, he adds, could not be the case, since they are all in the same style and contemporaneous with the erection of the

building. I should therefore suppose them to allude to the different races composing the population of Hadhr.

Before quitting the monuments we must not omit to notice the characters inscribed upon them, although, as travellers have neither copied them all, nor in the order in which they stand on such buildings as are still preserved, it would be impossible for orientalists to attempt a satisfactory explanation. One Chaldaic, and one Arabic inscription we may pass over, as both appear to be of little historical interest, and the latter of modern date. The other characters, although they do not as yet present themselves in the form of inscriptions, are however of importance, because their date is evidently the same as that of the edifices themselves, upon the stonework of which they are deeply graven. Ainsworth, who as well as Ross, gives us some specimens of them, adds that they are Chaldaic characters, or numeral and astronomical figures, and it appears to me, if I am not mistaken, that I recognise here and there a capital letter of the Greek alphabet, A, Δ, E, T, as if the races of Shem and Japhet had united together in the construction of this city. Ainsworth thinks that these characters were not merely, as now appears, intended to mark the stones for building; and whatever may have been their meaning, or the dialect to which they appertain, certain it is that they are to be referred for the most part to a

branch of the Syriac language, and to no very remote antiquity. Their evidence therefore agrees with that of the architecture and of the historical traditions which now claim our attention.

The race which from time immemorial inhabited the country between the Tigris and Euphrates appears to have been known by various appellations, of which the most appropriate is that of Aramæans, a people closely resembling the Syrians. The Orientals call them also Nabathæans, a name which we confine to that portion of them inhabiting Petra and other places to the westward of the Euphrates. They have also been called Assyrians, or Syrians, which are variations of the same word, or rather the second is comprehended in the first, as was Syria within the limits of Assyria, which likewise included Babylonia. Thus, the space between these two great rivers from the Taurus to the sea was peopled by one nation, speaking one language, and that the Syriac, divided into various dialects. A general idea of the ethnology of these regions is afforded by the statement of Abû 'l-Faraj, or Bar-Hebræus, a Syrian by birth, and a well-known writer of the thirteenth century, who enumerates three dialects of his language: the first and purest was the Aramæan, spoken at Edessa, in Haran, and in the rest of Upper Messopotamia; the second, that of Palestine; and the third, the Chaldæo-Nabathæan, which was in use in the mountains

of Assyria, and the plains of the kingdom of Babylon until his own times when, more than six centuries after the Mussulman conquest, Arabic had become the prevailing language of the cities. (See Quatremère's article, *Sur les Nabatéens*, *Journal Asiatique*, 2nd series, vol. xv., &c.)

On the decline of its power, the Aramæan race was subjugated first by the Persians, then by the Greeks, and lastly by the Parthians, but appears to have rallied when the Parthian empire began to fall into confusion; and in the second century B.C. we behold an independent state arising in the north, and two lesser ones in the south. The former of these was Osrhoene, which had for its capital Edessa, and for its limits the Tigris, the Euphrates, and the Khabur, which falls into the latter river at Circesum (Kerkisia), after bisecting the country between it and the Tigris. To the east were the states of Characene, on the Persian gulf, and Mesene, which extended beyond the confluence of the Tigris and Euphrates. (See Bayer, *Historia Osrhoena*, Petropoli, 1734). In the centre, several cities founded by the Greeks, amongst which was Seleucia, aspired to a certain degree of independence of the Parthian empire, of which the political institutions unquestionably lent themselves to the emancipation of the conquered people. It was a species of feudal system like that of Europe in the middle ages, or rather a confederation of petty princes under their suzerains,

the Arsacides. Hence, the central power was often feeble and vacillating, and it became comparatively easy to convert absolute into feudal supremacy by the proffer of tribute and personal service, the only advantages which a half-civilised nation like the Parthians knew how to derive from extended sovereignty. The people of Babylonia and Mesopotamia participated in the impulse which had animated their neighbours to the north and south, and sought to profit by the political weakness of their conquerors. The cities near the course of the rivers, inhabited by various branches of the Aramæans, with, possibly, some slight intermixture of the Greeks, enriched by commerce raised their heads, and aspired to self-government ; while the wandering tribes of Arabia, who began to frequent the steppes of Mesopotamia, found it easy to retain the independence secured to them by the natural characteristics of their native deserts, and perhaps showed no other allegiance to the Arsacides save that of abstaining from the plunder of the Parthian territories, and following them in time of war to ravage other lands. Hence arose the multitude of independent states and tribes spoken of in the first century after Christ by Strabo and Pliny, the former of whom throws a valuable light upon our subject, by informing us that the greater part of Adiabene was governed by a prince of its own, under the suzerainty of the Parthians ; that of the hordes of wandering Arabs, at once shepherds and robbers, scattered over the steppes of

Southern Mesopotamia, some acknowledged the authority of the King of Armenia, some that of the Arsacides; that those of Babylonia took part sometimes with the Parthians and sometimes with the Romans; and that the cities along the course of the Euphrates were ruled by as many petty princes, who, being poor and destitute of territory, supported themselves by extortions practised and subsidies levied upon the merchants, who undertook the transport of goods from India to Syria and the Mediterranean (Strabo, book xvi.). It is obvious that the population of these countries consisted chiefly of the aborigines, with some slight intermixture of their foreign rulers, the Persians and Greeks, and of their new guests, the Arabs—varying however in proportion in different parts; for in the north the Assyrian branch of the Aramæans had the preponderance, and in the south the Chaldaic; and while in the cities the Greeks and Persians would be in greater numbers than elsewhere, the villages and cultivated lands would be inhabited almost exclusively by the natives of the soil, and the steppes by the Arabs alone. The accounts we have of the population of Edessa, the traces of Greek art which are revealed in all the memorials of these times, and the indications in the writings of historians, leave no room for doubt on these points. The struggle of the Parthians with the Selencides, and afterwards with the Romans, beginning in the year 53 B.C., naturally favoured the tendency to emancipation of which

we have already spoken ; and it was doubtless at this time that the kingdom of Adiabene mentioned by Strabo and Dion Cassius extended its limits beyond the right bank of the Tigris.

If we turn now to consider the city of Hadhr, in particular, we can glean but little information concerning it from western authors, of whom the first to mention it is Stephen of Byzantium (in the sixth century), who speaks of it as a city between the Tigris and Euphrates, and gives a reference to the 17th book of the lost work of Arian upon Parthia.

It is no wonder that Strabo and Pliny should have been silent concerning it in their detailed account of Mesopotamia, as it was probably not yet built in their time ; but Ptolemy, who lived in the second century, and ought to have been acquainted with the name at least of the city which repulsed the arms of Trajan, makes no allusion to it.

Happily, however, all these deficiencies are supplied by a chapter in Masudi, which I here offer for the first time to the public, and which contains the beginning and the end of the history of Hadhr, coinciding perfectly with the traditions preserved by the Roman annalists. It is scarcely necessary to repeat that Masudi is the Strabo of the Arabs, that he lived in the tenth century after Christ, that he was a great traveller, and collected many facts and traditions which have subsequently been lost, and compiled them with a tolerable

degree of critical acumen. This cosmographer, when treating of an expedition of Sapor I. against Mesopotamia, about A.D. 240, states him to have turned aside from his direct course in order to assault the fortress called Hadhr, of which he recounts the history in the following words: (*Moruj-ed-deheb*, Paris MS., vol. i., fol. 268, *recto*.)

“ Hadhr,” writes Masudi, “ appertained to Sâtîrûn, son of Astîrûn, King of the Syrians, of the district known as Yiajr (or Aîajr) in the country of Mosul; a man celebrated by the poets for the might of his kingdom, the number of his troops, and the strength of the works erected by him in the citadel of Hadhr. They are mentioned amongst others by Abû Dâud Ibn Hamrân Ibn Hajjâj, of the tribe of Yîâd, in the following verses:—

“ And I saw death select in Hadhr, Sâtîrûn, the Lord of that people.

“ Ah! how secure was he from all reverses of fortune, how great were his riches, how many his hidden gems!

“ It is said, that No'man Ibn Mondir descended from this Sâtîrûn, in the following order:— Mondir, Imro'lkais, A'mr, A'di, Nasr, Sâtîrûn, and Astîrûn, of which the last two are the names (*Alkâb*) of kings who reigned over the Syrians.

“ After the above-named princes, whose dominion was destroyed by the vicissitudes of time, there reigned in this country Dhaïzan, who had for his mother Gebahalah, and was the

son of Mo'âwia, who reigned over his own tribe, a Tonukhite, descended from Malek, Fahm, Taïm-Allah, Asad, Wabira, Taghleḅ, Holwân, A'mrân, Allhâf, Kodhâa'. According to others, Dhaïzan was descended from Mo'âwia, A'tbek, Jarâm, Sa'd, Salîh, Holwân, A'mrân, Allhâf, Kodhâa'.

“ This Dhaïzan commanded a numerous military force, and was used to treat with the Romans, to seek support from them, and to send his people to make incursions upon Irak and Sewâd (Babylonia and Lower Mesopotamia) ; hence the enmity of Sapor, who at length marching to attack him, Dhaïzan fortified himself in Hadhr, against which Sapor remained encamped for a month without finding means either of reducing the fortress, or of effecting an entrance by stratagem. It came to pass, however, one day, that Nadhira, the daughter of Dhaïzan, beheld Sapor from the summit of the fortress, and became enamoured of him, for he was beautiful, and tall of stature beyond any other man. Nadhira, therefore, sent to say to him, ‘ If you will promise to marry me, and to prefer me before the rest of your women, I will show you the way to obtain possession of this fortress ;’ and Sapor having promised all that she desired, she sent him another message, to this effect : ‘ Ascend the course of the river Tharthar and sprinkle some straw upon its waters. Then follow the straw (*the course of the current*) ; mark

where it enters, and there cause your soldiers to go in; for this spot opens a passage into the fortress.' Sapor having acted accordingly, the garrison did not become aware of the enemy until they were already within the walls of Hadhr. Nadhira meanwhile, urged on by her great desire to become the wife of Sapor, had poured so much wine for Dhaïzan, that he became drunk. Sapor caused him to be slain, destroyed Hadhr, and espoused Nadhira."

Then follows the account of the death of Nadhira, which, being of no importance to our subject, need not be here transcribed. The facts, related also in the *Kitáb-el-Agháni*, and elsewhere, are briefly these. Nadhira being one night unable to sleep, her husband asked her what was the matter, and she replied that the bed hurt her side. "By God," exclaimed Sapor, "there is no king who sleeps upon a softer or more luxurious bed than this one, of which the mattress is stuffed with the down of the ostrich!" The next day it was found that the cause of all the evil was a sprig of myrtle upon which Nadhira had lain, and which had grazed her skin, so delicate was it. "Upon what then did your parents feed you?" thereupon exclaimed Sapor. "Upon cream," replied Nadhira, "marrow, snow, honey, and exquisite wines." "Ah!" cried the Persian, "you should have remained with your own kindred; I cannot maintain you as did your parents, whose death you occa-

sioned ;" and he caused her to be tied by the hair to two wild horses, so that she perished miserably.

Masudi concludes this chapter by the quotation of several poems concerning the fate of Dhaïzan and Nadhira, amongst which are four verses of A'di Ibn Zeïd, which merely record, without the addition of any further facts, her betrayal of her parents and her country.

Masudi's evidence is confirmed by that of Ibn Kotaiba, according to whom (see Eichorn's *Monumenta Hist. Arabum*, p. 180), Sâtirûn, King of the Syrians and Prince of Hadhr, was a Jarmekide of the country of Mosul and district of Nahirma (perhaps the Yiagir of Masudi). The author of the *Kitâb-el-Aghâni* likewise states him to have been of the race of Jarmeka, Garmeka, or Jaramika (for the vowels are wanting) in the second of his two articles upon Hadhr (Paris MS., vol. iii., fol. 163), where in treating of the defeat experienced by the I'badite Arabs at Hira, when fighting against one Sapor of the Arsacides, he says that the I'badites, led by Nasr Ibn Mo'âwia, of the tribe of Tonûkh, took refuge at Hadhr, a city built by Sâtirûn the Jarmekide, which assertion, as being positive and subsequent, must outweigh the more doubtful statement in his first volume, where, (vol. i., fol. 91, *verso*,) in a long commentary on the verses of A'di Ibn Zeïd quoted in the Solwân, he first names as the founder of Hadhr, Dhaïzan son of Mo'âwia, of O'beid, of

Aj'râm, of A'mr, of Nakha', of Salih, of Holwân, who had for his patronymic only his mother's name, reigned in these parts and in the rest of Jezîreh (nearly answering to the Mesopotamia of the ancient geographers), and extended his dominion as far as Syria; but on the other side of the sheet (fol. 92, *recto*) throws a doubt upon this tradition, and says that some bestowed upon this Dhaïzan the name of Sâtirûn, while others declared Sâtirûn to be descended from the race of Jaramika, and that the truth was known to God. Lastly, Ibn Khaldûn records these various traditions of different writers, some of whom brought the date of the founder of Hadhr as low as the time of Sapor II., but gives it as his own opinion that Sâtirûn sprang from the Jaramika, and was one of the *Moluk-et-tewaïf*, or petty princes, under the dominion of the Arsacides. This race of Jaramika was a branch of the Nabathæans, Aramæans, or Syrians, as we learn from a geographical work quoted by Quatremère (*Sur les Nabatéens*, ubi supra, p. 109).

From the above recorded evidence it appears to me certain that the native princes of the state which grew up in the region of ancient Nineveh and modern Mosul, between the second and first centuries before Christ, built the city of Hadhr as a place of safety and the seat of government; extended their sway over the province called by the Greeks *Αδιαβηνή*, or "Impenetrable," on account

of its rivers, and their incursions as far as Babylonia to the south, and the Euphrates (or even beyond it) to the west, thus accounting for the assertions of the Arab writers that their rule extended as far as Syria (Sham, which must not be confounded with Assyria); and were kings of Jezîreh, or according to others of Sewâd (the Brown), as the conquerors termed the fertile plains of Babylonia, in contradistinction to their own white and glaring deserts. It seems to me absurd to suppose that the state was ruled at its commencement by an Arab dynasty; for in those days the Arabs of Mesopotamia could barely pitch a tent, much less erect temples and fortifications, whatever they may have done in later days, after their intermixture with the Greek and Syriac inhabitants, at Palmyra, which had moreover, in all probability, existed as a great commercial emporium from very ancient times. The ruins of Hadhr give evidence of the handiwork of the natives by their grandeur, the Chaldaic characters traced upon them, and the temple filled with symbols of the worship of Mithras, called by the historians of the time of Severus "the magnificent temple of the sun." It is true that the population of Hadhr was partially composed of Arabs; and I think it not unlikely that before one stone of its splendid buildings was laid upon another, some wandering tribes of Bedouins may have been wont to pitch their tents beside its springs, as their descendants do at the

present day. I am encouraged in this belief by the name of Hadhr itself, which is manifestly of Arabic origin, and signifies a halting-place, and which the city bore in the days of Trajan, although its founders appear to have originally bestowed upon it another appellation; for Euty-chius, Patriarch of Alexandria, in describing the taking of Hadhr, which he attributes to Ardshir, the first of the Sassanides, says, that he pressed forward, subduing the *Moluk-et-tewaif*, “until he reached *Zohal*” (the planet Saturn), “which lies opposite to Maskan, and is otherwise denominated Hadhr;” for such, without a doubt, appears to be the meaning of the word incorrectly written *hisn* in the text. (Eutychiei, &c. Pococke, Oxford, 1659, p. 368). We find no trace of this other name in Masudi, or any other writer; but it would be no marvel if the founders had desired to dignify their impregnable fortress with the name of the most remote and unattainable of the planets, which we find employed as a comparison to set forth the formidable height of a castle in the narrative of the invasion of India by Khosroes Anûshirewân, in chap III., § ix. of the Solwân.

The mighty city which had thus sprung up in the midst of the desert was enriched and supported by the commerce, to which it opened a new road, between Osrhoene and the central provinces of Persia. But this situation entailed upon it the calamities of war at the commencement of the

second century after Christ. We find the first mention of it (under the name of Atræ, or Hatra) in Roman history, when Trajan, declaring war against the Parthians for the possession of Armenia, which had always been an apple of discord between the two empires, was compelled by the necessity, or tempted by the facility, of the enterprise, to occupy the region extending from the Taurus to the Persian Gulf, the perpetual scene of conflict between Rome and Persia. Two campaigns sufficed to subdue it. In 114 he reduced the northern portion, where several petty princes endeavoured to detain him and gain advantage to themselves by temporising both with Rome and Persia. But Trajan spared only the son of Abgar, King of Edessa, and pressed on vigorously against the rest. (See Dion Cassius, *Hist. Romana*, edit. Reimar, Book lxxviii., chap. xxi. and xxii.) Meanwhile one, Mebarsape, or Bebarsape, according to Dion Cassius, King of Adiabene, a province of ancient Assyria including Nineveh and Arbela, declared war against the Romans. Trajan thereupon assaulted Adiabene; his captains occupied Sinjar and the surrounding country; and the following year, launching a flotilla on the Tigris, he crossed that river, and took possession of the whole kingdom. Hence it would appear that the kingdom of Mebarsape extended beyond the right bank of the Tigris as far as the Khabur, since it included Sinjar; and that, in consequence, Hadhr

must have submitted to the Romans in the campaign of 114. In 115, Trajan, being now master of the Tigris, descended, without encountering further opposition, to Ctesiphon, Mesene, and Characene on the Persian Gulf, on which he embarked, lamenting his advanced age, which forbade his carrying his arms into India, in imitation of Alexander. But while he was meditating new conquests, he narrowly escaped losing those already secured; for the whole country rose in rebellion behind him, compelling him to return with all speed, and send his captains to scour Mesopotamia, from Seleucia to Edessa. At the cost of much bloodshed they reduced the so-called rebels to submission; and Trajan, after deceiving himself and others with the vain ceremony of inaugurating a king of his own creation to reign at Ctesiphon over the Parthians, proceeded to his last military enterprise before the walls of Hadhr.

This city, which had revolted like the rest, was, according to Xyphilon, who wrote an abridgment of Dion Cassius, dedicated to the sun, and, as the latter informs us, was not accounted amongst the most wealthy and powerful, but was defended by the surrounding desert, destitute of all save unwholesome water—an expression obviously applying to the Tharthar, which is more or less brackish according to the time of year. The enterprise was evidently considered one of great difficulty, since it

was undertaken by the Emperor in person, and this opinion was justified by the event. After a siege of several days, the engines of the Romans opened a breach in the wall, and they advanced to the assault ; but the garrison and citizens defended themselves so valiantly, that Trajan, laying aside the insignia of royalty, rushed himself into the *mêlée* ; but being recognised by the enemy, his hoary head became a mark for their blows, which, adding to the discouragement of the assailants, they sounded a retreat. Thus repulsed, the Romans were compelled to raise the siege of a city too strong to be taken by storm, and against which it was impossible to encamp for any length of time, owing to the tempests to which the besiegers would have been exposed without shelter, the myriads of insects, the unwholesome quality of the water, and the want of provisions, the convoys being intercepted by Bedouin hordes ; Trajan therefore retired with his army. (Dion Cassius, *ibid*, chap. xxiii. to xxx.) He fell ill shortly after, and upon his death Adrian restored Mesopotamia to the Parthians.

Nearly a century elapsed before the Roman eagles again appeared before Hadhr. At that time the name of the king of the country was, according to the western authors, Barsemius, the Latin imitation of Barsuma, which was doubtless a Syriac name. (See Caussin de Perceval, *Essai* ii., p. 42 ; Quatremère, *Sur les Nabatéens*, *Journ. Asiat.*, 1835, pp. 135, 219.) This Barsemius had sent succours to Niger, who

disputed the empire with Severus ; and the latter, having defeated his rival, hastened to take vengeance on his ally A.D. 199. At Hadhr he met with an obstinate resistance, his engines were burnt, his followers slaughtered by the Arabs ; and the veteran emperor was compelled to raise the siege. He repeated the attempt in person one or two years later, taking with him the celebrated military engineer, Priscus of Byzantium, a great array of troops, and abundance of supplies. Thus, notwithstanding the frequent sallies of the besieged, the assaults of the Bedouin tribes, the diseases which infested the camp, the liquid pitch which was poured from the walls, and the volleys of darts showered from the engines of the city, the Romans at length succeeded in springing a mine, opened a breach, and were about to advance to the assault, when they were unexpectedly restrained by Severus. Whether it were, as some writers have supposed, from the covetous desire of obtaining by capitulation the treasures of the temple of the sun, which would otherwise have fallen a prey to the soldiers, or that the emperor was more aware than his followers of the hopelessness of success, he resolved on giving the besieged a night's respite, in which fear might do its work and bring them to terms, but which they, on the contrary, employed in raising an interior wall. The next day Severus caused the Syrians to attack the breach, in place of the discouraged or indignant

Romans, but they were repulsed; and after a siege of twenty days, Severus retired, as Trajan had done before him. (See Dion Cassius, Book lxxv., chap. 10, 11, 12; and Herodian, Book iii., chap. 1 and 9.) The latter is utterly ignorant of the locality, and not only places Hadhr in Arabia Felix, but on the summit of a lofty mountain, whereas at a few miles distance its walls can scarcely be discovered on the level horizon of the desert.

In following the course of events we must here record (and perhaps it should even have preceded the expedition of Severus), a fact related by Eastern chroniclers, namely, that one of the last of the Arsacides despatched the Prince of Hadhr at the head of an army to make an incursion into the Roman territory, whence he returned with much booty and many prisoners (*Modjmel-al-tewarikh*, translated by Mohl, *Journ. Asiat.*, 3rd series, vol. xii., p. 497, &c.) Lastly, about A.D. 223, we have the siege of Hadhr by Ardshir, son of Babek, who, says his contemporary Dion Cassius, having possessed himself of the empire of the Parthians, and desiring to make war against the Romans, began by assaulting the city of Hadhr, and succeeded in making a breach in the walls; but having lost many of his followers before it, turned back like Trajan and Severus.

It was amid such vicissitudes that the first dynasty was, as Masudi says, "destroyed by time," and was succeeded by another, doubtless Arabic,

being that of Dhaïzan, who, as descended from Kodhâa', was of pure Arab blood. We are enabled to determine with tolerable precision the period of this change of dynasty ; since, in the time of Severus, viz., about A.D. 200, we still find a King of Hadhr with a Syrian name, and we know that the fall of the city took place about 240. Moreover, it appears as if the change had been the result of unavoidable necessity rather than of violence ; for after the expeditions of Severus, the number of Arabs around Hadhr increased greatly, as appears from the western historians, who even speak of the citizens as Arabs ; and from a passage in the *Kitâb el Aghâni* (Paris MS., vol. i., fol. 91 *verso*), which speaks of the Arabs of the tribe of Kodhâa', assembled under the command of Dhaïzan, as innumerable. It is, therefore, not unnatural that the Arabs should have become the masters *de facto* of the state whose boundaries were those of the desert, namely, the Tigris and Khabur, as well as of the city which was in the midst of it, for under such circumstances any resistance offered by the ancient dynasty of Hadhr would have been vain. The head of the ruling tribe, that of Tonukh, probably espoused a daughter of Barsemius, the last Prince of the Jarmika, and I am led to suppose that she was the Gebahalah, wife of Mo'âwia and mother of Dhaïzan, mentioned by Masudi, who adds that the latter took for his patronymic the name of his mother, which, being contrary to all

custom, can only be accounted for on the supposition that it was to her that he owed the right of succession. After the Sassanides had gained possession of the throne of Persia, the Arab chiefs of Hadhr, as well as the other petty princes of those regions, were threatened with the Persian yoke, which, notwithstanding their nominal submission to Ardshir, they sought the earliest occasion to throw off, and naturally inclined towards the Romans, who occupied the strong city of Circesium at the confluence of the Khabur and Euphrates, put a check on the power of the Persians, and diverted their arms from Mesopotamia. (Gibbon, *Decline and Fall*, chap. viii., note 53.)

But when the young and warlike Sapor I., sur-named Sapor "of the Hosts," ascended the throne, his vengeance fell in the first place upon Hadhr, for the political reason assigned by Masudi, to which there is nothing opposed in the anecdote related in the *Kitáb-el-Aghâni*; namely, that Dhaïzan, profiting by the absence of Sapor in Khorassan, made an incursion into Babylonia, and brought back with him to Hadhr, together with a vast amount of prisoners and of spoil, also a sister of the king of Persia. Sapor hastened at the head of a powerful army to chastise him. The siege, which lasted a month according to Masudi, is prolonged to two years by a poet quoted by Ibn Khaldûn, and to four by the *Kitáb-el-Aghâni*, and others. The most probable statement by far being

that of Masudi, which would lead us to conclude that there was a subterranean conduit communicating with the interior of the city, and of which the opening into the Khabur was so concealed, that it could be discovered only by observing the direction of the current. Even if Sapor did not take Hadhr by this stratagem, which was employed by Belisarius, and in later times by the Arragonese, to effect an entry into Naples, the aqueduct must have existed, and the course of the Tharthar might have been nearer to Hadhr than it is at the present day. The *Kiláb-el-Agháni* says, that Nadhira beheld Sapor when she went out to walk in a suburb of the town, as was the custom of the women of the country. The taking of Hadhr, attributed by various writers to three different kings of the house of Sassan, namely, Ardshir, Sapor I., his successor, and Sapor II., who reigned two centuries after—ought undoubtedly to be attributed to Sapor I., both on the evidence of Masudi, and because of the following passage in Ammianus Marcellinus, where he treats of the passage of the desert of Sinjar during the unfortunate retreat of the Roman army after the death of the Emperor Julian, A. D. 363. “We were proceeding,” said he, “by forced marches, when we came near to Hatra, an ancient city situated in the midst of the desert, and long since deserted, which the warrior princes Trajan and Severus repeatedly sought to subdue, as we

have recorded in the chronicle of their actions.” (Book xxv. chap. viii.), a chronicle which must have existed amongst the lost works of Ammianus Marcellinus. Caussin de Perceval observes that the Roman general would not have used the expression *Olimque deserta*, had Hadhr been destroyed by the reigning monarch of Persia, Sapor II. (For the taking of Hadhr see Eutychius, Mirkond, and the *Modjmel-al-Tewarikh*, as quoted above.)

I cannot conclude this note without pointing out the error into which I conceive St. Martin to have fallen, the rather that his statement has been adopted by the learned Caussin de Perceval—(*op. cit.* vol. ii. p. 40). St. Martin, rightly judging that some principality must have arisen in the neighbourhood of Hadhr, under the Parthian empire, after examining the annals within his reach, and some Greek coins of Osrhoene and Characene, comes to the false conclusion that *Mannus* was King of Hadhr in the time of Trajan, for which he has no other foundation than the fact that Trajan besieged Hadhr, and had persecuted Mannus, one of the petty Syriac princes enumerated as his opponents in his first campaign against Adiabene, by Dion Cassius. But Dion Cassius mentions the name of Manisarus as well as Mannus, the Greek coins give that of Monneses likewise, and Mirkond mentions the somewhat similar one of Manizen or Menizan, as that of the Prince

of Hadhr, slain by Sapor, and St. Martin hence concludes that all these were variations of one and the same name, borne by one or more Arab princes who reigned in Mesopotamia, or at least at Hadhr. (Saint Martin, *Recherches sur l'Histoire de la Mésène et de la Characene*, &c., Paris, 1838, p. 242, etc.) This somewhat lame hypothesis is correct as regards the existence of a more or less independent state situated as St. Martin described, and known as he forgot to add, at the time of Trajan's expedition, under the name of Kingdom of Adiabene; but he is mistaken in representing it as an Arabic principality from the time of its foundation, and also as to the names of its princes, and his error is rendered still more manifest by the total omission of that of Bebaraspes, and the conclusion naturally drawn from it by Caussin de Perceval, that Dhaïzan is the proper form of the name corrupted into Mannisar, Monneses and Mannus. Dhaïzan is, indeed, the proper form of a name that has been corrupted, but not of those recorded by Greek and Roman historians. In my opinion it is the same with the Manizen of Mir-kond, the *Dhizen* of the history of Bakou, and *Dhiren* of the *Modjmel-el-Tewarikh*. (See De Sacy, *Antiq. de la Perse*, p. 286; and Mohl, *Journ. Asiat.*, 3rd series, vol. xii., p. 605.) Now Dhizen is merely a variation of pronunciation of Dhaïzan, and one point omitted in the letter *z* changes it into an *r*, and makes Dhiren. Those who are

conversant with Arabic and Persian MSS. will, moreover, agree with me, that the letter *dhad* (the fifteenth of the Arabic alphabet), if written at all hastily or carelessly in the style of Egypt, Syria, and Persia, may easily be mistaken for the letters *m* and *n* in conjunction, so that the most experienced Orientalist might hesitate between Dhaïzan, or Dhizan, and Manizen. The probabilities are so great in favour of this supposition, and against the correctness of Manizen preserved by Mirkond alone, that I venture to sustain a contrary opinion from that of Caussin de Perceval and St. Martin.

To sum up, in a few words, the result of my researches. My conviction is, that shortly before or after the Christian era, some daring and successful dweller in the country around Nineveh, shook off the Scythian yoke, and founded an independent native principality, in Adiabene ; that allying himself with the Arab tribes of the desert, westward of the Tigris, he, or some of his successors, in order to secure themselves against the Parthians, built Hadhr in the course of the first century after Christ; that the Arsacides themselves, or Ardshir, son of Babék, took from them the territory on the eastern bank of the Tigris ; that the river and the strong walls of Hadhr preserved the independence, although subject to tribute, of the principality in the desert of Sinjar; and that on the extinction of the native dynasty, the gradually

increasing preponderance of the Arabs of the tribe of Kodhâa, caused the sovereignty to pass into the hands of an Arab family. Long after the dispersion of the inhabitants of Hadhr, the name of Dhaïzan appears to have been perpetuated amongst them; for we recognise it in the Taizanes mentioned by Malala as one of the Arab chiefs who accompanied Mondir III., King of Hira, in his Syrian campaign.—(Caussin de Perceval, *Essai*, etc. vol. ii., p. 94.)

This last paragraph would have been a more than sufficient commentary on the verses of A'di, had I been preceded by any other in the labyrinth of obscure research, which I have here laid before the reader; or if the learned M. Caussin de Perceval had been acquainted with the writings of Masudi, and the travels of Ross and Ainsworth. It should appear from the expression of A'di that his "Lord (literally, *Brother*) of Hadhr," perhaps the same Sâtirûn mentioned by Masudi, had been driven from the throne before his death, of which we have, however, no other notice.

We may suppose A'di to have been well informed on the subject of Hadhr," as he must have had before him the chronicles of the Kings of Persia and Hira, and probably passed through Hadhr on his way to Constantinople. He treated of it more than once in his writings, for the verses quoted by Masudi concerning Dhaïzan and Nadhira, being in a different rhyme and metre, could not form

part of the elegy, a portion of which is preserved to us by Ibn Zafer.

³⁷ Literally, "And he made the roofs of lime, upon the ridges of which," &c.

³⁸ Sedir was the name of the second castle erected by No'man I, in the neighbourhood of Hira.—(See note 13, chap. iv.)

³⁹ Literally, "Hence after prosperity, empire, or association (whether religious or civil, a body of men united by one common law), they were here covered by the tomb. Hence they became like a withered leaf, whirled in the air by the east and west wind." Of these verses we find the 9th, 10th, and 11th in Ibn Badrun (p. 96), and in the work of Caussin de Perceval (vol. ii., p. 59.) The *Khitâb-el-Aghâni* gives the whole of them, with very few variations. Paris MS., vol. i., fol. 91, *recto*.

⁴⁰ The term Mistress of the Robes, an imitation of the *Βεστis* of the Byzantine court, may appear misplaced at so early a date; it, however, conveys the exact meaning of the author.

⁴¹ I leave to those who have leisure for it the task of tracing the identity of the King of the Alani, and the martyr, his vizier.

⁴² s. A., 535, says Christian. s. A., 536, has *mumin*, or believer, implying more particularly a Mussulman; but it is evident that Christians are here intended.

⁴³ This passage, beginning "O King, the old man was speaking," is to be found only in s. A., 536. The purified edition, in which the virgin is ex-

pressly stated to be a Christian, could not attribute such language to an "infidel," as he would be regarded by good Mussulmans.

"Literally, you have "struck a light in my liver, which will not fail to burn." The liver was, according to the Arabs, the seat of the passions. The word here rendered light, is the instrument for striking a light, which was the same amongst the Arabs that is used amongst barbarians of all parts of the world, namely, a stick rubbed against a piece of grooved wood.

⁴⁵ S. A., 535, says merely: "He believed." S. A., 236 adds: "And when he had made profession of the Unitarian faith."

⁴⁶ All the MSS. have "*Jaria* vipers." I should be inclined to efface one diacritic point, which would change the word to *haria*, "dried up"—viz., a viper worn out by age, so that, as the Arab saying is, nothing of it is left, but its life, its head, and its venom, when its bite is more dangerous than at any other time.

⁴⁷ Literally, "to whose sword and the energy of whose will bodies are *r . . kk* and spirits *r . . kk* The vowels are wanting, and my idea is that the word should be in the first instance *rekk*, which means a sheet of paper or parchment, or, used as an adjective, "thin;" and in the second *rikk*, which has, amongst other meanings, that of "servitude."

⁴⁸ The word for which I have inserted *refuse* at a venture is illegible in the MS.

⁴⁹ The story which follows is introduced in s. A. 536, with these words: "The author says, here is a parable concerning the king whose own passions urge him to toil for the benefit of others. Perchance there may have been a tame elephant, etc."

⁵⁰ s. A. 536 prefaces the speech of the elephant with the usual protestation that perchance God bestowed intellect and utterance upon these two animals, as he did aforetime upon the camel, who complained to Mahomet of his master who gave him much work and little food. The complaint of the camel is recorded in the *Mishcat-ul-Masabih*, vol. ii., p. 717, which, however, does not say that the camel spoke plain, but only that he made a noise so as to be understood by Mahomet, who desired to buy him in order to set him free. A camel had scarcely need of speech in order to inform an Arab whether he was well or ill treated, and it is clear that the comrades of the Prophet had very little audacity in the promulgation of miracles. Those more enlightened, as Pococke justly observes, gave little heed to these fables, and regarded the Koran as the sole miracle of their religion.

⁵¹ The word which I have translated *maxims* has another meaning in Arabic dictionaries, but was doubtless used in this sense by the author. It is derived from the root *Karam*, "to honour," and would thus be the Arabic counterpart of the Greek *ἀξίωμα*, an axiom.

⁵² The Arabic name of this instrument, which we recognise in the Italian *taballa* and the French *timbale*, appears to have been a corruption of the Greek *τύπανον*.

⁵³ The word which I translate *air* is *Habbah*; but I know not whether it ought to be written with two *b*'s, in which case my translation would be correct, or with one, when it might be considered as the aggregate noun of *Hab*, a serpent.

⁵⁴ A club does not seem to me a weapon adapted for use on the back of an elephant; but Meninski gives this interpretation to the word *Amûd*, which literally signifies a column, and other dictionaries merely state it to be a kind of weapon.

⁵⁵ In the original *Seng*, which signifies not only castanets, but a species of violin.

⁵⁶ s. A. 536 here introduces a saying of the Caliph Omar Ibn Khattab, and one of Abû Moslim el Khaulani, addressed to the Caliph Moawia I.

⁵⁷ s. A. 536 substitutes "O Babek! thou wouldst not leave all this wealth!" and the young man answered him, "I will indeed leave it to whosoever values it; and as for myself, instead of wasting it, I will abstain from its use."

⁵⁸ s. A. 536 does not put this tale in the mouth of Babek, but the author gives it as his own, thus: "The author says: here is meanwhile a story which I have composed to represent a man,

who disposes erroneously of that which he has taken."

⁵⁹ The word which I translate meadow literally means a small area or space in front of a dwelling, probably a paddock.

⁶⁰ I know not whether *jibaïah*, tribute, here alludes to that rendered by the serfs of the glebe, or to the rents paid by tenants.

⁶¹ S. A. 536 has: "He was deeply grieved to quit those scenes; and then he sighed," &c.

⁶² S. A. 536 has in the singular: "The wise man said," and the same in the two following maxims.

⁶³ Literally, "the world of the lights." In S. A. 536 the work ends here, and is followed by the bibliographic notice which I have inserted in the Introduction.

⁶⁴ The author here alludes to the fearful interrogatory of the tomb. According to the Mussulman creed, no sooner is a man interred than the two angels, Monkir and Nakir, call him to give account of his religious opinions. If he declares himself a true believer, the tomb expands seven thousand cubits in a square, and the elect beholds the seat which is prepared for him in paradise at the day of resurrection. But the unbeliever, or the hypocrite, feels the tomb contract, and his bones bruised by blows from the club of an angel, in the midst of which tortures he beholds from afar the place reserved for him in hell. The

answer to the angel must be brief and explicit: "I know the Prophet;" or "I know him not." (See *Mishcat-ul-Masabih*, Book v., chap. iii., entitled "The Punishment of the Tomb," vol. i., p. 366, &c.)

THE END.

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